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**THE EUROPEAN UNION'S IMPACT ON TURKEY'S
PATTERN OF CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS**

by

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June 2005

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PATTERN CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS**

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ABSTRACT

From the mid-1950s until 1997, civil-military relations in Turkey followed a distinct pattern. Friction between the armed forces and the civilian government led to a series of *coup d'états* which then institutionalized greater political power for the military as the country transitioned back to a democracy. In essence, the seeds for subsequent interventions were planted by the previous coups. This happened in 1960, 1971, and 1980. This “friction, coup, power” pattern was sustained by the collective security environment during the Cold War. Turkey’s “soft” coup of 1997 would produce different domestic results because the international environment had changed. Even though Turkey was a democracy and a NATO member, it did not qualify for EU membership because of the quality of its democracy. One of the measures was its failure to gain civilian control over the military. Beginning in 1998, the EU tied the status of Turkey’s civil-military relations to its membership bid. In July and August of 2003, the Turkish Parliament ratified a series of legislation packages designed to curb the influence of the military. These institutional changes designed by the European Union represent only the first step in Turkey’s attempt to gain democratic civilian control of its military.

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I. INTRODUCTION: TURKEY'S PATTERN OF CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS

The Republic of Turkey was founded with the help of its armed forces but it was never intended to be a military regime.¹ Mustafa Kemal Atatürk charged the military to be the guardian of society but was also adamant that the military remain out of politics. The former general banned serving officers from holding political positions for fear that the political process would corrupt the military.² As early as 1923 Atatürk believed that republicanism and civilian control of the military were the keys to the success of the Western nations.³ He established a civilian administration and secured the backing of the military by legitimizing the army's role as the defender and protector of society.⁴ Despite Atatürk's vision, the generals became entangled in Turkish politics beginning with the first military coup d'état of 1960. Since then Turkey has wavered between democracy, technocracy, and military rule.

Turkey's level of democratic civilian control of its armed forces (DCAF) can be charted beginning in the 1950s. Each of the four military interventions in Turkish politics pushed Turkey's civil-military relations farther away from the liberal ideal of democratic civilian control in a definite pattern. Concurrently the Turkish National Security Council (Milli Güvenlik Kurulu -- MGK) created in 1961, continuously increased its political power following each intervention until 1997.

A. DEPENDENT VARIABLE—DEMOCRATIC CONTROL OF THE ARMED FORCES (DCAF)

Democratic civilian control is attained when the sole legitimate source for the direction and actions of the military is derived from democratically elected civilians outside the military and defense establishment. Usually the military is the roadblock in

¹ When becoming President of the Turkish Republic, Atatürk traded his uniform for a suit. This set the standard that an officer must resign his commission before going into politics. However, once a General always a General, which was one of the reasons why Atatürk and İnönü maintained the support of the military during the First Republic 1923 to 1960.

² Jenkins, Gareth. (2001) *Context and Circumstance: The Turkish Military and Politics*. Adelphi Paper 337 (London: Oxford University Press for IISS), p. 33.

³ Perlmutter, Amos. *The Military and Politics in Modern Times*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977, p. 163.

⁴ Perlmutter, 111.

this relationship when it refuses to accept civilian supremacy. Once DCAF is established, maintaining it is a dynamic process susceptible to changing ideas, values, circumstances, issues, personalities and to the stresses and crises of war. Civilian control of the armed forces is a process necessary to preserve the domestic liberty in a democratic society.⁵ Taken to the extreme, DCAF could be interpreted as the elimination of all military prerogatives. However, a castrated military is neither practical nor desirable for reasons of national security. Some level of military autonomy is required.⁶ Therefore, when measuring DCAF the question is not whether it is present, but to what degree is it present.

Alfred Stepan, who is most famous for his work on South American regimes, sought to understand how an authoritarian regime -- where the military played an important role in the State -- could change into a democracy capable of controlling the military.⁷ He measured the type of civil-military relations in Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay, and Spain during the 1980's as a function of *relative power* and *friction between the military and the elected government*.⁸ Adapting a similar model to the Turkish case provides a way to gauge the level of DCAF over time as a function of *civil-military friction* and the *political power of the military*. Bounding the upper limits of the two independent variables creates a "property space" in which different values of DCAF can exist.⁹

The extreme edges of the **Civ-Mil Friction** and the **Political Power of the Military** axes define four categories of DCAF. These categories are: civilian control, unequal civilian accommodation, an unsustainable position for military leaders, and a

5 Perlmutter, 6.

6 This is inferred from Samuel Huntington's definition of "objective civilian control" of the military where the military is a tool of the state.

7 Stepan, Alfred. "The Military in Newly Democratic Regimes: The Dimension of Military Contestation." *Rethinking Military Politics: Brazil and the Southern Cone*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press. 1988 p. 68.

8 Stepan, 68. Stepan focused on two factors that he called the dimensions of civil-military relations: articulated military contestation and military prerogatives. These concepts will be referred respectively as friction and power.

9 Stepan, 100.

near untenable position for democratic leaders.¹⁰ Figure 1 shows the four categories of DCAF adapted from Stepan's model.

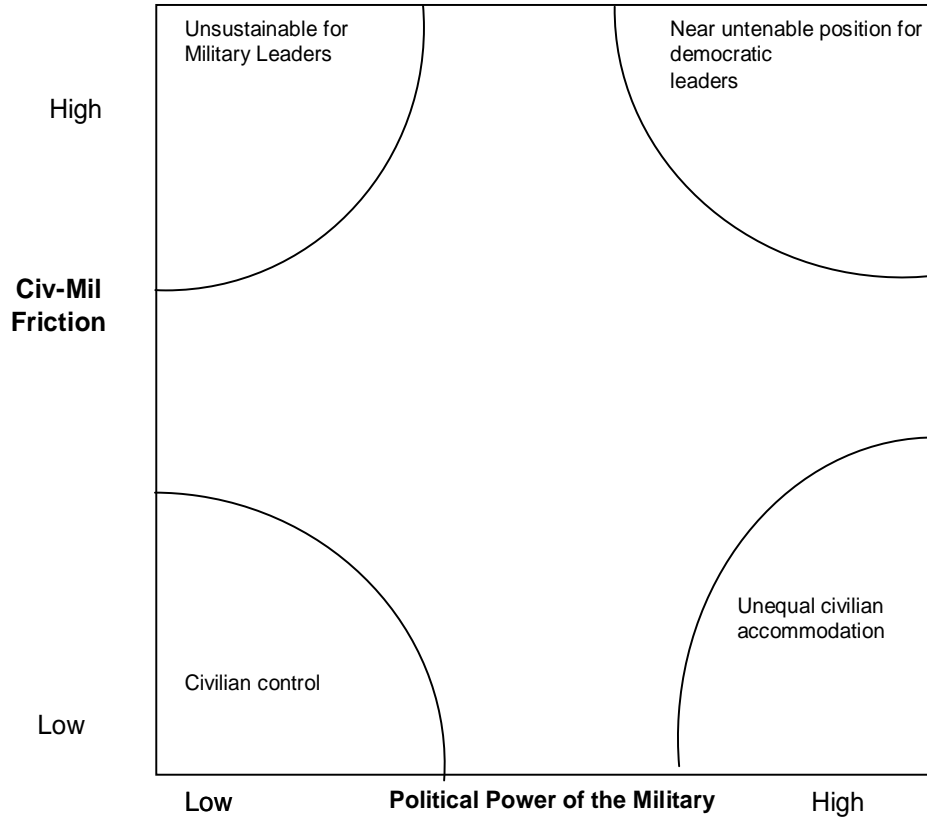


Figure 1. Four Categories of Civil-Military Relations (After: Stepan, 100)

The ideal level of civilian control is represented by the lower-left corner of the graph where friction and the military's political power are both low. While civilian control implies complete subservience of the military to the elected officials, it does not mean the military has to be weak. In this corner of the graph, it means civilian preferences prevail over military preferences with respect to issues concerning the military and politics. One example would be parliamentary oversight of the defense budget. The United States and most Western democracies fall into this category.

¹⁰ Stepan, 100. These are the names I gave to the categories defined by Stepan which are: Civilian control, an unsustainable position for military leaders, near untenable position for democratic leaders, and unequal civilian accommodation.

In circumstances where there is little civil-military friction and the military retains significant power, the civilian government is weaker than the armed forces. For example, in Brazil during the mid 1980's, the political party system was fragile which allowed the military to maintain significant prerogatives vis-à-vis the politicians.¹¹

If there is a high degree of civil-military friction but low military political power, the military has a lot of “bark but no bite.” This represents a “defanged” military and resembles a case which Samuel Huntington called “subjective civilian control.”¹² The closest example to a “defanged” military is what happened to the CEE countries following the end of the Cold War. Military budgets and armed forces were slashed to accommodate other domestic reforms at the expense of military capabilities. This extreme case is an unsustainable position for military leaders. Spain during the attempted takeover of 1981 approached this quadrant.¹³

The final measure of DCAF is represented by a high degree of civil-military friction accompanied by a large number of powers granted to the military. This extreme region represents a situation untenable for a democratic government. From 1960 through 1997 Turkey's civil-military relations have moved farther away from civilian control towards the high, right corner of the graph.

This two dimensional descriptive model is a convenient method to show changes in civil-military relations. It also lays the foundation to explain *why* the changes occurred. Based on historical observations of the interventions, an increase in Turkey's civil-military friction is followed by an increase in the political power of the military. The spark, or intervening variable, is a military *coup d'état*. Therefore the pattern of civil-military relations in Turkey can be summarized as friction, coup, and power. The resultant power then became institutionalized into Turkish law.

B. THE INDEPENDENT VARIABLES OF FRICTION AND POWER

The two dimensions of democratic civilian control of the armed forces (DCAF) are friction and power. Civil-military friction is defined as the level of intense dispute or substantial agreement between the military and the politicians regarding a number of key

¹¹ Stepan, 93-128.

¹² Subjective civilian control exists when the civilians maximize their power over the military as an institution. In simple terms, the civilians control too much of the day to day business of the military.

¹³ Stepan, 93-128.

issues whether publicly stated or not, provided it is “relevant to the military and political actors.”¹⁴ The second dimension of DCAF is the political power of the military which is defined as “a prior, exclusive, or peculiar right or privilege.” These are “areas where, whether challenged or not, the military as an institution assumes they have an acquired right or privilege, formal or informal, to exercise effective control over its internal governance, to play a role within extra-military areas within the state apparatus, or even to structure relationships between the state and political or civil society.”¹⁵

1. Sources of Civil-Military Friction

The most obvious sources of civil-military friction in Turkey concern the definition of Kemalism, the rise of Islamic Fundamentalism (*Irtica*),¹⁶ Kurdish separatism, and membership in the EU. Less obvious sources of friction include the prestige and economic well-being of the military. To different extents these same sources of friction existed since Turkey’s transition to multiparty politics. During the 1950s and 60s the social and economic status of the military officers became another significant source of contention. But the ultimate source of friction emerges from differing definitions of Kemalism between society, the politicians, and the military.

Kemalism is the core philosophy underlying the establishment of the Turkish state since 1923 and proved a successful alternative to the ideologies of Fascism and Communism during the 1930s. In this period, the military became the *de facto* guardian of the Kemalist principles which form the fabric of the military’s attitude towards society and the politicians. Kemalism consists of six pillars commonly referred to as the “six arrows”: Secularism, Nationalism, Populism, Republicanism, Statism (Etatism), and Reformism. It should be noted that while each “arrow” is significant, their relative importance to the military and society varies over time. For example, Ataturk originally relied on the primacy of nationalism to develop the Turkish State. But since 1960 secularism has become the chief component. “Kemalism is enshrined in the Turkish

14 In his South American cases, Stepan recognized three areas for potential disputes between the military and the politicians in the 1980’s, namely human rights, the organizational arrangement of the military vis-à-vis the democratic government, and the military budget. Stepan, 68 and 111.

15. Stepan, 93.

16 *Irtica* means “reactionaryism” and is a negative term to describe the “Islamic fundamentalism.” Gunay, Niyazi. “Implementing the ‘February 28’ Recommendations: A Scorecard,” Research Note 10. Washington Institute for Near East Policy. May 2001. Found on the web at: <http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/junior/note10.htm> (Last accessed on 5 June 2005).

Constitution and includes a rigorous commitment to secularism, territorial integrity, and cultural integrity.”¹⁷ Those who question Kemalism are considered traitors.¹⁸ And while no one questions the overall philosophy, the components are fungible.¹⁹ The notion of statism, which symbolized a state run economy during the 1940s, evolved to mean a state planned economy during the 1960s and 70s. Statism as a principle decreased in importance during the late 1980s when Prime Minister Turgut Ozal introduced market reforms.

Almost any disagreement between the military and the politicians can be framed in relation to one of the principles of Kemalism. Because of their close association to the Kemalist principles, the military becomes concerned when society’s interpretation of the principle strays too far from its own. To the elements of the military Generals, the rise of political Islam is viewed as a threat to secularism while Kurdish separatism contradicts the nationalist notion of territorial integrity. Membership in the EU represents another source of contention between the armed forces, society, and the civilian government at different periods of time. The military does not regard EU membership as necessary to the prosperity of the Turkish state.

2. Sources of Power

The EU Commissioner’s reports²⁰ are “spot on” concerning the political influence of the Turkish military. The armed forces exert power through formal and informal means. Formal powers gained by the military are cemented in the institutions when the military “returned to the barracks.” Some examples of these institutions are the brief National Unity Commission (NUC) 1960; the 1961 and 1982 Constitutions; the National Security Council (MGK); the Armed Forces Assistance Funds (OYAK); and various working groups associated with the Turkish General Staff (TGS).

In addition to the legal instruments of power, the armed forces derive legitimacy from their role in the development of the Republic. The fact that the modern Turkish

¹⁷ Jenkins, 7.

¹⁸ Jenkins, 17.

¹⁹ The concept of Kemalism can be summed up as a “commitment to progress.”

²⁰ These are the EU Commission’s Regular Reports on Turkey’s Progress towards Accession. Specifically I am referring to the regular reports on Turkey authored in 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, and 2002.

Armed Forces (TAF) has never suffered a defeat contributes to the image of the military in society as Turkey's most trusted institution. Finally, little boys in society are told that "every Turk is born a soldier."²¹

3. The Relationship between Friction and Power

When civil-military friction rises, the military's political power increases only after an intervention by the armed forces. And when the political power becomes institutionalized, it serves an additional source of friction. As a result, the level of friction does not decrease when the military returns to the barracks. This has the effect of "ratcheting up" the civil-military friction after each intervention. This phenomenon makes civil-military friction behave "sticky upwards" meaning that once it is established, it cannot decrease without a preemptive decrease in the political powers of the armed forces.

C. THE INTERVENING VARIABLE – THE COUP

Political scientists have categorized the four interventions as either a "moderating" or "guardian" regime based upon Eric Nordlinger's criteria describing military *coup d'états*.²² The difference between the two types of coups is the behavior of the military after the intervention. Acting as a moderating force, the military intervenes long enough in order to get the civilian government back on track. Turkey's 1971 "coup by memorandum" and the "soft" coup of 1997 fit this category. In a guardian regime, the military replaces the civilian government with one more favorable to the military. Usually the guardian regime occupies power for only 2 to 4 years before returning governance to the civilians.²³ The military takeovers of 1960 and 1980 are examples of guardian regimes. But this analysis is not enough. Since there is no predetermined level of friction which will trigger the takeover, it indicates that the decision to intervene is both rational and subjective. Intervention is a rational decision because the military understands the possible outcomes of the takeover and makes a decision based on a cost/benefit analysis between the *status quo* and the possible consequences.

²¹ Jenkins, 13.

²² Videt Knudsen, Birtel. (2005) "The Role of the Military in Turkish Politics." Unpublished paper from the Middle East Technical University. January 2005. and Hale, William. (1994) *Turkish Politics and the Military*. London: Routledge.

²³ Hale, William. (1994) *Turkish Politics and the Military*. London: Routledge. p. 300-310.

The subjective view of the military is important since it determines when to intercede. The act of intervention creates consequences that can hurt or help society and concurrently either hurt or help the military as an institution. In other words, the decision to intervene represents a preference by the military where it can “do good” or “do well.” Doing “good” means supporting the Turkish State by upholding the Kemalist principles and maintaining stability in society. Doing “well” represents a preference by the military to promote its own corporate interests and status. The ideal situation for the military is when it can do “good” and “well” at the same time. The Turkish Armed Forces perfected the coup d'état but the decisions of when and how to intervene were not taken lightly. The armed forces were successful at doing “good” and “well” from 1960 to 1980. The “soft” coup of 1997 became the exception. In this case, the military neither achieved “good” for society nor did “well” in furthering its own interests.

Chapter II summarizes Turkey's four military interventions using the friction, coup, and power framework. It concludes by showing how the status of civil-military relations moved further away from the ideal of democratic civilian control. Chapter III highlights the external factors which sustained Turkey's pattern of civil-military relations during the Cold War and how Turkey's pattern became no longer acceptable afterwards. Chapter IV details how EU-Turkey negotiations reversed the pattern of civil-military relations in Turkey. Finally, Chapter V identifies four scenarios for the future of Turkey's civil-military relations depending on whether or not the EU and Turkey remain engaged in accession talks.

II. A SUMMARY OF THE INTERVENTIONS

Reviewing the history of each of the four interventions in the friction, coup, power framework shows how the military became the most powerful actor in Turkish politics. It also highlights the similarities between the interventions. While none of the coups were executed exactly the same, they were all well received by Turkish society. By 1980, the *coup d'état* became a legitimate domestic political instrument. However, by 1997 that would change.

A. FRICTION, COUP, POWER – 1950-1961

1. Friction

Turkey transitioned to multiparty politics between 1945 and 1950. While this evolution was an important step forward for democracy, it precipitated friction between the military and politicians. The details of the transition are important for three reasons. First, it illustrates the strong relationship between the military and the conservative Republican People's Party (*Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi*--CHP).²⁴ Although the military was technically politically neutral it was closely aligned with and favored the CHP through the 1970s. Second, it highlights how differently the political parties viewed the armed forces role in society. Thirdly, the events set into motion the military coup of 1960 which forever damaged civil-military relations in Turkey.²⁵

Prior to 1950, civil-military friction in Turkey was virtually nonexistent. At the end of World War II, Turkey was ruled under martial law. It also helped that the President, former pasha Ismet Inonu, was widely respected by the military.²⁶ Beginning in 1946 the *Demokrat Parti* (DP) emerged behind the leadership of former CHP members. Initially this was not perceived as a threat by the armed forces because they assumed the DP would possess similar beliefs about Kemalism. This was a logical

²⁴ The CHP was the political party founded by Ataturk.

²⁵ Videt Knudsen, 18.

²⁶ Taschau, Frank and Metin Heper. "The State, Politics, and the Military in Turkey," *Comparative Politics*, Vol 16, No. 1 (Oct. 1983), p. 20.

assumption since the leader, Celal Bayar, served as Prime Minister during Ataturk's last government and formerly served as the economics minister in the 1930s.²⁷

In 1946, President Inonu even supported the creation of an opposition party in order to show the West that Turkey was truly a democracy.²⁸ Inonu reasoned that this image was important in order to maximize the monetary grants²⁹ from the US under the Truman Doctrine.³⁰ Besides being a matter of principle, democracy was also important for Turkey's bid for NATO membership.³¹ But at the same time, Inonu did not intend to lose to the DP. Despite his success in calling for early elections the DP still won a number of seats in parliament. Though it was not enough to wrestle power away from the CHP, the tide would change in just four short years.

In the 1950 elections, the DP surprised the CHP by gaining a solid majority in parliament that would last for the entire decade. The DP attained 59.3% of the vote while support for the CHP was less than 40%. The 19% difference in the popular vote translated into an overwhelming majority for the DP. As a function of the Turkish electoral laws the DP won 408 seats in Parliament versus the CHP's 69. Voter turnout was close to 80%.³² The DP had its greatest support from the educated elite from the industrialized western portion of Turkey who expected the party to continue the current modernization process. The fact that the election produced the first President and Prime Minister who were not former military officers generated mild concern for the military.³³ Neither President Celal Bayar nor Adnan Menderes had any military experience. In fact, most of the DP representatives did not possess a military or bureaucratic background.

Following the CHP's electoral defeat in 1950, the military petitioned Inonu looking for guidance on whether or not they should intervene. Inonu declined the offer either due to a belief in the democratic system or because of a fear of having international

27 Ozbudun, Ergun. (2000) *Contemporary Turkish Politics*. Boulder: Lynne Rienner. p.19

28 A multiparty competitive political system was a requirement for NATO membership. Chapter II expands upon this issue.

29 From 1947 until 1960 Turkey received approximately \$3 billion in US. Weiker, 1.

30 Zurcher, Erik J. (2004) *Turkey: A Modern History*. 3d ed. New York, NY: I. B. Taurius & Co. p. 209.

31 Turkey had competitive elections but was not a consolidated democracy.

32 Zurcher, 221.

33 Weiker, 20.

aid discontinued. The military hoped the DP would uphold the same attitudes towards the military as the CHP since the roots of the party sprang from the CHP.³⁴ In recounting the aftermath of the election, General Kenan Evren told this story about actions of the General Staff.

Nuri Yarmut [the new chief of staff]...collected all the officers in a garden behind the General Staff headquarters and told them that the government had gone over to a democratic system; they were to carry on with their jobs and not to interfere in politics. Basically most of the officer corps, especially the young officers, were pleased with the result. Those unhappy were mostly the elderly and those with strong links to the past.³⁵

It did not take long for civil-military relations to sour. Ironically, the “young officers [who] were pleased with the [electoral] result” would become part of the machine responsible for the first intervention in 1960.

Shortly after taking office, the DP made it well known that the military “carried no weight in the [political] decision-making process.”³⁶ The new leadership distrusted the military because of their close relationship to Inonu. The Turkish General Staff was purged and the regime no longer guaranteed the military autonomy from political interference in its affairs.³⁷ Two examples of this meddling are when Prime Minister Menderes interfered with the promotion systems of the armed forces and the Chief of General Staff (CGS) was subordinated to the Minister of National Defense (MND).³⁸

The Menderes government refused to keep the military’s wages on par with the rising inflation rates during the economic downturn in the mid 1950s. As a historically privileged class, the soldiers now suffered the indignity of being known as *gazozcular*, or those who could only afford soft drinks, in the bars around Ankara.³⁹ Not only had the military lost its access to the “pinnacle of power” but also its social status and prestige.⁴⁰

³⁴Weiker, 19.

³⁵Pope, 88.

³⁶Momayezi, Nasser. (1998) “Civil-Military Relations in Turkey.” *International Journal of World Peace*. September 1998; 15, 3, p 3-28.

³⁷Zurcher, 238.

³⁸Hale, 93.

³⁹Pope, 91.

⁴⁰Taschau and Heper, 21.

As the real wages of the military failed to keep up with rising inflation opposition towards the DP grew within the military.

In the same time period, Turkey was accepted as part of the NATO club. To some extent, the military viewed NATO membership as a threat to its sovereignty. “No longer was the protection of the country...a function of Turkish forces and their deployment”⁴¹ The Turkish General Staff had to get used to a number of American military advisers.

The necessity for the DP to distinguish itself from the CHP only increased civil-military friction.⁴² The chasm between the two parties widened over the definition of secularism. One reason why secularism became an issue is because the Kemalist reforms of the 1930s had little positive effects for the worker in the field. From the peasant’s perspective, they were stripped of their religious traditions when the CHP imposed secularism on them. The masses did not understand why they were forced to abandon their Islamic traditions.⁴³ Prime Minister Menderes capitalized on this sentiment and used religion to gain votes in the elections during the 1950s. Menderes even claimed that “Turkey is a Muslim State and it will remain so.”⁴⁴ In response to these statements, the CHP accused the DP of using religion to buy votes. Even though the DP never attempted to “give Islam a greater role in government,” the CHP portrayed the DP as deserters of the Kemalist principles. In response the DP accused the CHP of being an atheistic party which implied it was a Communist party. This counter-accusation of atheism was not entirely true. The CHP defined secularism not as the separation between mosque and state, but as the “subjugation and integration” of Islam into the state bureaucracy.⁴⁵ Both of these definitions were at odds with the military’s view that religion was to be kept out of the public places. As a result, the armed forces became

41 Jacoby, Tim. “For the People, Of the People and By the Military: The Regime Structure of Modern Turkey.” Unpublished paper. p. 11.

42 Ozbudun, Ergun, 13-20.

43 Pope, 88.

44 Zurcher, 232.

45 Zurcher, 232-245.

increasingly unhappy about the DP's "infidelity" to the Kemalist principles.⁴⁶ These events set the stage for the toppling of the Menderes government in 1960.

2. The Coup d'État of May 27th 1960

Before the events of May 27th, 1960, the civilian *Demokratik Parti* (DP) briefly assumed civilian control over the military but abused the relationship by reducing the social status and the economic well being of the military.⁴⁷ What brought the military out of the barracks was Menderes' attempt to return to authoritarian rule in order to maintain the power of the DP.⁴⁸ More specifically, the trigger for the intervention was Menderes' use of the armed forces to enforce martial law in Ankara and Istanbul in order to seize control over large scale student demonstrations on May 1st 1960.⁴⁹ The military objected to being used in this fashion. Two days later, the Land Forces Commander, General Cemal Gursel was placed on "compulsory leave."⁵⁰ Ironically these events would generate significant consequences for Menderes. The same plans devised for the defense of Ankara to prevent further civil violence were used to oust the Prime Minister. General Gursel would become the leader of Turkey following the *coup d'état*.

The 1960 *coup d'état* is commonly called the "Colonel's" coup since it was planned and executed by 37 officers from within the ranks of the military as opposed to being ordered by the Chief of General Staff. The older, more senior officers did not participate in the takeover either because they stayed loyal to the Menderes regime or simply failed to understand the dissent within the army. The fact that the coup started within the ranks of the military and bypassed the traditional chain of command would have an impact on the subsequent interventions. The armed forces became exceedingly

46 Kinzer, Stephen. (2001) *Crescent & Star: Turkey Between Two Worlds*, New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, p. 63.

47 Jenkins, 6.

48 Heper, Metin and E. Faut Keyman. (1998) "Double-Faced State: Political Patronage and the Consolidation of Democracy in Turkey." *Middle Eastern Studies*, vol.34, p. 264.

49 Lombardi, Ben. (1997) "Turkey- The Return of the Reluctant Generals?" *Political Science Quarterly*. Vol 112, No. 2, Summer 1997, p. 204.

50 *Keesing's Online Record of World Events*. Student Demonstrations in Istanbul and Ankara. July 1960, p. 124527. Available on the web at: Keesings.com (Last accessed on 8 June 2005).

concerned with the sentiments of the junior officers. In contrast to 1960, the coups of 1971, 1980, and 1997 would be executed with the authority from the highest levels of the military command.

The perpetrators of the takeover accused the Menderes government of “abolishing all individual and human rights, freedoms and immunities” as well as “establishing a single party dictatorship.”⁵¹ Tanks rolled into the streets while the army took the President and Prime Minister into “protective custody” and announced the end of the Menderes government.⁵² The military justified its actions to the public and the international community as necessary to prevent the perversion of the democratic system and Kemalism.⁵³ As a military operation the execution was perfect. It took only 4 hours to establish military control.⁵⁴

In order to add legitimacy to the May 27th coup, the leaders solicited the support of General Cemal Gursel. It was thought that a general officer of his stature was needed to discourage splinter groups within the armed forces from attempting their own counter coup. After all, military officers understood the difference between a coup and a mutiny. The former Land Component Commander was an easy leadership choice since he was well respected within the military and was only forced to retire a few weeks prior. In his last speech before he was placed on leave, Gursel warned his troops about the “greedy political atmosphere now blowing through the country.”⁵⁵ In his first speech after the takeover, Gursel stated the purpose of the intervention was to “bring the country with all speed to a fair, clean and solid democracy.”⁵⁶ Ironically, as a General who was outspoken against the politicization of the military, Gursel would become the first President of Turkey’s Second Republic.

The purpose of the takeover was to revamp Turkey’s political structure and prevent another “Menderes type” government. Once accomplished, the military was

⁵¹ Hale, 120.

⁵² Weiker, 20.

⁵³ Momayezi, 7.

⁵⁴ Weiker, 20.

⁵⁵ Lombardi, 204-5.

⁵⁶ Lombardi, 204-5.

committed to transition back to civilian rule. But the post-coup ruling period proved much tougher than expected.

3. Power – The NUC, OYAK, and the MGK

In the post-coup period, three instruments of power emerged that would shape the future of Turkey's domestic politics. The first was the National Unity Committee (NUC) that acted as the interim government for 17 months. By way of the NUC, the military directed the development of the new Constitution to replace the one created in 1924. The second institution established after the rebellion was the Armed Forces Mutual Assistance Fund (OYAK). It is a retirement fund for the military officers and civil servants whereby each member contributes 10% of their monthly wages in return for a retirement pension.⁵⁷ By providing an extra source of money, OYAK was an effective way for the military to remain independent from the whim of the politicians. The final institution was the National Security Council (MGK) which granted the military a legal voice in politics. The MGK initially started as an advisory board but became the primary means through which the military could thrust its policies on the government. There were several failed attempts to challenge the authority of the MGK during the late 1980s and 90s. The only successful challenge would come from the European Union.

a. The National Unity Committee

The National Unity Committee (NUC) was a temporary institution to administrate the functions of government. It was composed of the 37 officers who originally planned the takeover. The takeover was met with passive acquiescence by the public.⁵⁸ Keenly aware of its reputation in the eyes of society and the international community the military promised a speedy return to civilian rule. But before the military would relinquish control it tried to remove the sources of friction. First, the committee outlawed the DP and forbade any new political party to invoke its platforms or ideologies. However, that strategy failed since the spirit of the DP would be reborn in the Justice Party (JP) led by Suleyman Demirel. Second, the military sought to provide a new Constitution for the Republic that would “plug the holes that Menderes tried to use in

⁵⁷ Hale, 174.

⁵⁸ Hale, 120.

order to return to authoritarianism.”⁵⁹ But the problem was not the document; it was the fact that Menderes violated the old Constitution. The new Constitution was carefully worded to prevent politicians from returning to authoritarian rule. In the end it provided the armed forces with more avenues to legally intervene in politics.⁶⁰ Thirdly, 5,000 officers considered ‘radical’⁶¹ by the NUC were purged from the military ranks. This indicates how concerned the interim leadership was about a counter coup.

As an instrument of government the NUC was hindered by a feud within the organization concerning the appropriate length of time to maintain military control. Fourteen radical officers of the NUC wanted to maintain military rule indefinitely while the moderate majority was determined to keep their promise and return control to the civilians as soon as possible. The firing of 147 professors by the radical faction of the NUC was the trigger which led to the dismissal of “The Fourteen.”⁶²

Just one day after the coup, the NUC appointed a cabinet composed of 15 civilian officials and 2 military officers to determine the most important matters requiring attention. Within two months the cabinet listed 15 critical areas. Most of the items concerned economic reforms. A significant critique of the Cabinet was that it was just a façade for the military to run the government. Interviews conducted by Walter Weiker with the members of the NUC indicate that the former members listed education, literacy, and land reform as the three most important issues facing Turkey. Only 4 of the 37 members considered religion a problem. This calls into question just how much Menderes’ courting of the devoutly religious population played in the decision to intervene. The motives for the coup become more suspicious when the same interview process by Weiker uncovered that planning for the coup extended all the way back to 1955.⁶³ What this suggests is that Menderes’ attempted return to authoritarianism provided the opportunity to legitimize the coup in the eyes of society and the international community. At the end of the NUC’s 17 month rule, not only had the

⁵⁹ Weiker, 11-13.

⁶⁰ Hale, 129.

⁶¹ In this context, radical refers to those members of the NUC who wanted to keep a military regime indefinitely.

⁶² Weiker, 23.

⁶³ Weiker, 118-135.

military ended up with significantly more power to legally intervene in politics. The armed forces had also gained better pay and benefits for its officers.

The committee also supervised the development of the new Constitution.⁶⁴ To accomplish this, the NUC created the Constituent Assembly in January of 1961. The composition of the 296 man assembly included the entire NUC and members appointed by Gursel and the CHP. While the composition of the assembly seemed to indicate a return to civilian control, the number of CHP representatives in the council gave the impression that the transition back to democracy would mean a return to rule by the CHP and Ismet Inonu.⁶⁵

The 1961 Constitution granted a number of political powers to the military. The document returned the Chief of the General Staff directly under the direction of the Prime Minister instead of the Minister of National Defense. This effectively gave the Chief of General Staff more powers.

The Constitution also protected the outcome of the *coup d'état* by deeming that all laws adopted by the NUC were immune to judicial review. While other norms and conditions were subject to review by the judicial branch, the changes made by the military were not because they were granted a privilege incompatible with the supremacy of the Constitution.⁶⁶ The 1961 Constitution also established the constitutional court, the State Planning Organization, the autonomous State Radio and Television Agency and universities, and the Council of State.⁶⁷ After the NUC disbanded a number of the participants became Senators in the Turkish Grand National Assembly.⁶⁸ In the transition from an authoritarian regime to democracy, the military left itself with 'exit clauses' that protected its prerogatives.⁶⁹

⁶⁴ Weiker, 17.

⁶⁵ Hale, 138-139.

⁶⁶ Ozbudun, Ergun and Serap Yazici. *Democratization Reforms in Turkey (1993 – 2004)*. Istanbul: Tesev Publications. 2004. p. 32-40.

⁶⁷ Heper and Keyman. 264

⁶⁸ Ozbudun and Yazici, 33.

⁶⁹ Ozbudun, Ergun, 116.

b. OYAK

The Armed Forces Mutual Assistance Fund (OYAK) was established as a retirement account for military officers and civil servants. Each contributes 10% of their income to the OYAK fund. The unintended consequence was that OYAK is now one of the most dominant financial institutions in Turkey. They have expanded their investments into various sectors with joint ventures such as OYAK-Renault in the automobile industry.⁷⁰ In addition to providing a pension, sources interviewed indicate that OYAK is also a chief employer of retired military officers and their families. Unlike Western democracies, the military is not dependent on the civilian government for financial support.

c. The National Security Council (MGK)

Article 111 of the 1961 Constitution created the National Security Council. The purpose of the institution was to “recommend to the Council of Ministers the necessary basic guidelines regarding the coordination and the taking of decisions related to *national security*” [italics added].⁷¹ Through the years, the organization began to see itself as the protector of economic, territorial, and political interests as well as the protector of Kemalism.⁷² One of the important tasks attributed to the MGK is the National Security Policy Document (NSPD) which defines the main threats to Turkey’s national security and sets the guidelines for security policy. Unlike Western democracies such as the United States and Great Britain, there is no parliamentary oversight of this document in Turkey. Nor does anyone inside the Council of Ministers (unless they occupy a place in the MGK) have an input into the document’s creation.⁷³

Until the summer of 2003, the MGK consisted of the Chief of General Staff, the four Chiefs of the Armed Services, the General Secretariat, the President, Prime Minister, Foreign Minister and any ministers deemed necessary. The organization was authorized to make decisions regarding national security matters only. This eventually became an avenue for the military to influence the decision making process of civilian

⁷⁰ Karabelis, Gerassimos (1999) “The Evolution of Civil-Military Relations in Post-war Turkey, 1980-1995,” *Middle Eastern Studies*: Oct 1999; Vol 35, No. 4, p. 140, n. 81.

⁷¹ Jenkins, 45.

⁷² Jenkins, 46.

⁷³ Jenkins, 47.

governments. After the 1980 intervention, the military was able to dictate what those threats were. From the perspective of the military, the creation of the MGK was a rational decision to protect the state. If the military had more access to the civilian government, common sense would suggest that the need for another coup would disappear. This would prove not be the case and the evolution of the MGK would become the major instrument used by the General Staff to assert power over Turkey's politicians.

B. FRICTION, COUP, POWER – 1965 TO 1973

1. Friction

The 1960 coup failed to promote good governance or political stability.⁷⁴ As a result, the underlying friction between the military and politicians was not resolved, only masked. The decade of the 1960s was marked by an increase in political violence brought on by both the left and right political factions. The Communist workers party which was outlawed in 1925 reincarnated itself in 1961 as the Turkish Workers' Party.⁷⁵ In response, the government established an ultra-right organization called the "Society for the Struggle against Communism" with Cemal Gursel as the honorary chairman. In addition, the "Grey Wolves" gained popularity as a right winged youth organization that eventually targeted leftist meetings.⁷⁶ Communism was now an internal and external security threat to the Turkish State. The military perceived the political violence as a threat to the state as early as 1968. The government's failure to quell the situation aided the military's decision to intervene. By 1970, the senior military commanders already started refused to support the unpopular government.⁷⁷

2. March 12, 1971

The military considered Prime Minister Demirel's (JP) government too weak to maintain control in the face of rising political violence. Factions within the military started planning for their own interventions. Sensing the growing instability within the military, the National Security Council took action. The "memorandum" handed to Prime Minister Suleyman Demirel had two purposes. First, it insinuated the military would take

⁷⁴ Jenkins, 37.

⁷⁵ Hale, 176.

⁷⁶ Hale, 177-178.

⁷⁷ Lombardi, 204-6.

direct control of the government unless the government restored order and implemented reforms to return the Kemalist spirit.⁷⁸

Parliament and the Government, through their sustained policies, views and actions, have driven our country into anarchy, fratricidal strife, and social and economic unrest; made the public lose all hope of reaching a level of contemporary civilization, a goal set by Ataturk; failed to realize the reforms stipulated in the [1961] Constitution; and placed the future of the Turkish republic in grave danger.⁷⁹

Second, the memorandum was actually an attempt by the MGK to maintain unity within the armed forces and preempt another “Colonel’s coup.” Faced with the memorandum, the Demirel government resigned immediately. This may have been fortunate for Turkey since the MGK was unprepared to handle the crisis. It is most likely they would have ended up in a predicament similar to 1960 when it was uncertain how to run the government in the post-coup period.

3. Power

After Demirel’s resignation, the military selected a number of technocrats to run the country. By 1973 the government was handed back to the population. This only occurred after the military increased the power of the National Security Council in their favor. The influence of the MGK’s decisions over the Council of Ministers was strengthened. In the same time period, the Supreme Military Administrative Court was established and authorized to resolve administrative disputes concerned with the military authorities or military matters. The powers of the civilian Council of State were restricted. The State Security Courts were established and allowed some judges and prosecutors to be military officers. This opened a channel for the military to exercise significant power in the judicial process. The expenditures of the TAF were excluded from the judicial review of the Court of Accounts. The declaration of martial law was made easier which strengthened the overall power of the military. These changes to the Constitution magnified military’s influence in politics. As a result, Turkey’s CMR moved farther away from the ideal of civilian control.

⁷⁸ Jenkins, 37.

⁷⁹ Lombardi, 206.

C. FRICTION, COUP, POWER – 1975 TO 1982

1. Friction

Again, the 1971 intervention and resultant technocratic government did little to relieve the friction between the military and civilians. From 1973 to 1980, Turkey's economy and political order were both crumbling while violence continued to rise. Parliament could not decide on a new President. The rift between the CHP and the JP widened. The CHP party leader, Bulent Ecevit, hated the leader of the JP, Suleyman Demirel. Furthermore, the National Salvation Party (NSP) which had indisputable Islamic ties was gaining popularity. The armed forces were indirectly affected by the political infighting which led to the imposition of martial law in 1978. In 1980, martial law was extended from 13 provinces to 20 provinces. Twenty-five percent of the armed forces were being used just to maintain civil order. This was a role not welcomed by the generals and was reminiscent of the environment in 1960.⁸⁰ Additionally the political polarization that was taking place in society started to take root in the armed forces as well. The Turkish General Staff became worried about the number of Turkish cadets who were being expelled from the military academies because of their open religious beliefs.

2. September 12, 1980

This intervention is often referred to as the coup of the “reluctant generals.” The label implies that the military waited until the last possible moment giving the politicians every opportunity to resolve the crises. Alternatively it can be interpreted that the military waited until the conditions were right so it could act to “do good” for society and “do well” for it as own institution. Given the evidence leading up to the *coup d'état*, it is hard to accept the motives for the coup were entirely altruistic.

Unlike May 27th operations, this takeover was executed with the permission and the support of the Chief of General Staff. General Kenan Evren, who was on active duty during the two previous interventions, understood the need to keep control of the middle ranked officers. By doing so he ensured the mistakes of the “Colonel's coup” were not repeated. The first mistake was the late recognition of the fractions within the military made after the NUC was established. The second mistake was the lack of planning for the

⁸⁰ Lombardi, 207-208.

post-coup regime. “We know what sort of (deplorable) situation the armed forces found themselves in 27 May. Should we repeat the same pattern?”⁸¹

There are two reasons attributed to the source of the coup. First, General Evren cites the failure of the Turkish parliament to come together and elect a President.⁸² Alternatively, Kenneth Mackenzie regards the trigger for the coup to be the Konya rally on September 6th, 1980. The rally was organized by the rival National Salvation Party (NSP) and consisted of a gathering of “Islamic fanatics” who called for the introduction of Islamic Law (*Shariat*).⁸³

As a military operation, operation *Black Flag* was flawless. Like the coup in 1960, there was little resistance. The takeover was bloodless and the junta was established without incident. By learning from the mistakes of 1960, the military’s planning for the post-coup government was much more thorough. The military, through the MGK, would successfully rule for Turkey for the next three years.

3. Power

The MGK dissolved the parliament and consolidated power in the hands of only the military members of its council.⁸⁴ The next step undertaken by the MGK was the establishment of a new Constitution. In almost the same manner as in 1961, the MGK appointed a commission to write the new document which institutionalized many of the prerogatives gained by the military.⁸⁵ The new Constitution increased the executive powers of the President and the MGK.⁸⁶ As a result the Council of Ministers was now bound to “give priority consideration to their recommendations.” Article 118 of the Constitution was amended to reflect the new legal power vis-à-vis the politicians.

Just as important as the changes to the Constitution was the passage of the National Security Council Law of 1983. Gareth Jenkins comments that the new NSC law defined national security in such broad terms that almost any subject could be considered

81 Demirel, Tanel. “The Turkish Military’s Decision to Intervene: 12 September 1980” *Armed Forces & Society*, Vol. 29, No. 2, Winter 2003, pp. 264.

82 Demirel, 264.

83 MacKenzie, 15.

84 Zurcher, 278-279.

85 Jenkins, 42.

86 “The 1961 Constitution proved to be an unworkable amalgam of checks and balances in which the judiciary became the supreme organ and the powers of the executive were circumscribed.” MacKenzie, 29.

a “matter of national security.”⁸⁷ The military could now define the threats and influence decisions on laws regarding those threats.⁸⁸ This permitted the MGK to monopolize the defense sector.⁸⁹ Additionally, the 1982 Constitution increased the military’s power by changing the structure of the courts. This had a compounding effect on the military’s prerogatives. Article 125 of the Constitution was changed to regulate judicial control over all administrative acts and actions. This weakened the rule of law by granting the military immunity from judicial review.

D. FRICTION, COUP, POWER – 1993 TO 1997

1. Friction

The major sources of civil-military friction during the 1990s came from the rise of radical political Islam and Kurdish separatism.⁹⁰ Not surprisingly the military considered these direct threats to the Kemalist principles of secularism and nationalism. The prerogatives granted by the Constitution after each coup reinforced the guardian image of the military and the MGK.

The stakes were different in 1997. The Turkish Armed Forces which had kept Turkey on the road to Westernization and eventual EU membership became a roadblock to its own goals. At the same time the Turkey was engaged in a civil war in the southeastern portion of Anatolia against the PKK separatists. 1997 was the height of the war against the PKK which started in 1984.⁹¹ In addition the Turkish armed Forces were compelled to deal with the rise of the Islamist Welfare Party (*Refah Parti*-RP) headed by the Prime Minister Necmettin Erbakan. The RP came to power winning only 21% of the vote and relied on a weak coalition government with Tansu Ciller’s True Path Party (TPP).⁹² One of the members of the MGK who oversaw the 28 February process said the following: “Nobody, for the sake of democracy, can look the other way when a party

⁸⁷ Jenkins, 46.

⁸⁸ Jenkins, 46.

⁸⁹ Gareth Jenkins comes to roughly the same conclusion. In theory spending on defense was subject to parliamentary review. In reality, the TGS is able to determine the force structure and the procurement of defense needs. See Jenkins, 53.

⁹⁰ Jenkins, 7.

⁹¹ Videt Knudsen, 10.

⁹² Lombardi, 193.

attempts to set a state based on Islam even if that party obtained more than 50 percent of the vote...If necessary such a move would be obstructed in a non-democratic means.”⁹³

The Islamist leanings of Erbakan were unbearable for the military and the political elites. Starting with his campaign, Erbakan made disparaging remarks against NATO and EU membership. In one of his campaign speeches he claimed he wanted to create an “...Islamic NATO and an Islamic version of the EU.”⁹⁴ With respect to foreign policy, Erbakan also embarrassed the armed forces during his overseas travels. This was evidenced by his association with Iran and by his visit to Libya in 1997. In a joint press conference with Muammar Qaddafi, the Colonel scolded Erbakan and the secular nature of Turkey as Erbakan sat quietly and failed to respond.⁹⁵ The military was shamed by the Prime Minister’s failure to address the insults.

Unlike the previous coups, the military had to weigh the decision to intervene against the possibility of ruining its chances for EU membership. This complicated the military’s decision. When the armed forces decided to act, they failed to do “good” for society or do “well.”

2. February 28, 1997

The “soft” coup was executed by the National Security Council during the routine monthly meeting. The council met with the Prime Minister for 9 hours and at the end of the meeting the MGK forced Erbakan to sign an agreement to implement 18 measures designed to stop the Islamization of society.⁹⁶ The increase in political Islam was the official reason for the intervention, but during this period of the 1990s, almost every topic became a matter of friction between the politicians and the military.

93 Heper, Metin. (2002) “The Military-Civilian Relations in Post-1997 Turkey,” Unpublished paper. Prepared to be submitted at the ‘IPSA Armed Forces and Society Research Committee Conference, ‘Globalization of Civil-Military Relations: Democratization, Reform, and Security’, Bucharest, Romania, June 29-30, 2002. p. 5. Available on the web at: http://wfass-leg.fass.waikato.ac.nz/dzirker/IPSA-conf-02/Metin%20Heper/The%20Military-Civilian%20Relations%20in%20Post-1997%20Turkey_files/The%20Military-Civilian%20Relations%20in%20Post-1997%20Turkey.htm (Last accessed on 3 Jun 2005).

94 Lombardi, 194.

95 Turkish Press Review 1/14/2003. Available on the web at: <http://www.byegm.gov.tr/YAYINLARIMIZ/CHR/ING2003/01/03x01x14.HTM> (Last accessed 3 Jun 2005).

96 Cizre, Umit and Menderes Cinar. (2003) “Turkey 2002: Kemalism, Islamism, and Politics in the Light of the February 28 Process.” *The South Atlantic Quarterly* 102: 2/3, Spring/Summer 2003. p. 309.

The Prime Minister was rather taken aback by the demand of the MGK, but did not regard the situation as an immediate problem. He would later resign because he had lost credibility with his constituency as well as with the military. In order to expedite his removal, the military engaged in a public support campaign designed to reduce the legitimacy of the Erbakan government and the *Refah Parti*. This created quite a few results. First, Prime Minister Erbakan could not get any of the 18 demands passed through the Turkish Grand National Assembly (TGNA). This caused him such political embarrassment that he resigned four months later. Following Erbakan's resignation, Mesut Yilmaz became the new Prime Minister and would carry Turkey through the 1997 Luxembourg summit. By 2002 only 4 of the 18 recommendations were carried through.⁹⁷ Despite the removal of Erbakan and the eventual dissolution of the *Refah Parti*, Turkey still failed to gain EU candidacy.

3. Power

This “post modern” coup highlights the ultimate power of the National Security Council. At first glance it appears to mimic the 1971 “coup by memorandum,” but it was different because the military did not have to threaten a takeover. It was just the mere power of suggestion by the MGK that brought down the Prime Minister. Of particular note is that the MGK consisted of the same primary members, but the staff that supported the Secretariat General had grown to over 350 people.⁹⁸ Another reason why the MGK executed so much power in the meetings was its ability to speak clearly and cogently on the topics for discussion. This is in contrast to the civilian ministers who were never as prepared as the military members of the council.

The MGK and the Turkish General Staff created the Western Research Group (*Bati Calisma Grubu* – BCG) on the eve of the 1997 coup.⁹⁹ This group was supposed to monitor potential political developments within Turkey and determine whether or not they were a threat to the Republic. Their Western Research Group's focus after the coup became looking for signs of radical Islam. For example, the BCG looks for military

⁹⁷ Heper (2002), 6.

⁹⁸ Jenkins, 45.

⁹⁹ Heper (2002), 7.

officers and politicians who stray from the principle of secularism. The Western Research Group also keeps files on people based on their religious practices.

However, unlike the previous military interventions, the MGK actually lost power through a number of legal reforms. When the EU targeted Turkey's National Security Council for reforms, this was a change to "business as usual" for the armed forces and an end to the pattern of civil-military relations.

E. PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

Based on the summary of events since 1960, Figure 2 shows how civil-military relations in Turkey progressed away from civilian control.¹⁰⁰ At the same time, the diagram correlates the changes in friction and power with respect to the successful interventions by the military. This diagram demonstrates the pattern of Turkey's civil-military relations. The arrows between the coups are demonstrative of the relative increase in friction and power over time. They are approximations intended to show the general trend.

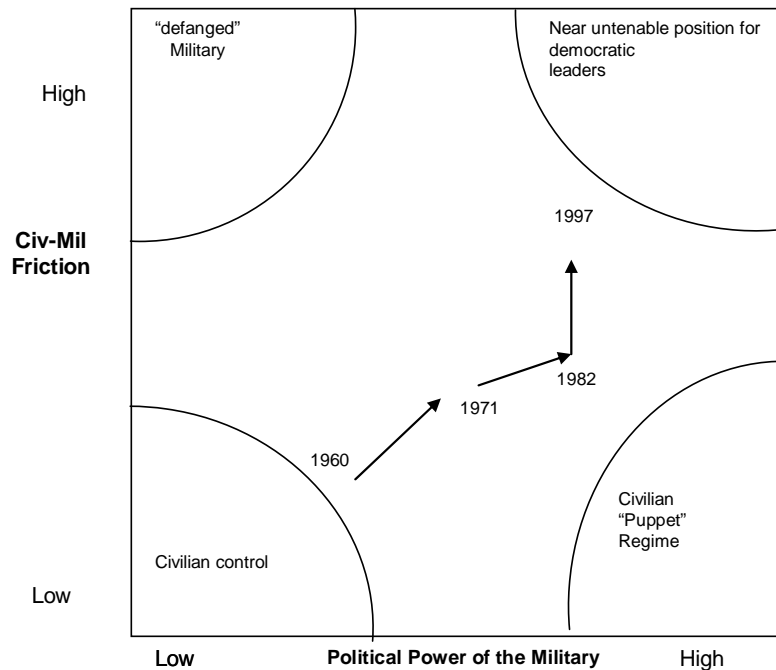


Figure 2. Turkey's Civil-Military Relations 1960-1997

¹⁰⁰ For a description of how this model was applied in Latin America, see Stepan, 122.

Rather than treating the four military interventions as discrete actions, this thesis asserts that the *coup d'états* are interrelated and that the seeds for each subsequent intervention since 1960 were planted by the outcomes of the previous coup. This pattern only masked the underlying friction between the military, politicians, and society while the armed forces continuously gained political power up until 1997. For example, the rise of political Islam, which defies the military's definition of secularism and thus the concept of Kemalism, is cited as a reason for the first coup in 1960 as well as in 1980 and again in 1997. In addition, threats considered dangerous to the territorial integrity of Turkey such as the rise of communism and Kurdish separatism in the 1970's, are used as explanations for military interventions in 1971, 1980, and 1997.

Looking at democratic control of the armed forces (DCAF) as a function of civil-military friction and the military's political power unveils a distinct pattern in Turkey's civil-military relations away from the ideal of civilian control. This shows that while Turkey was attempting to become more Western, its democracy was becoming less liberal. This happened during the Cold War and while Turkey was a reliable NATO member. The movement away from civilian control continued until 1997 when the pattern ended. The cycle ended because the rules of the game were changed by the security environment after the Cold War. Turkey's ability to execute a *coup d'état* as an instrument of domestic policy, even if it was non-violent and "post modern," was deemed no longer acceptable to the international community. Chapter III investigates the external factors which sustained and later changed Turkey's pattern of civil-military relations.

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III. EXTERNAL FACTORS

Turkey's domestic pattern of civil-military relations from 1960 to 1997 demonstrated how the military became the most powerful actor in politics. Even though the country returned to democracy after short periods of authoritarian rule, the character of civil-military relations moved farther away from the ideal of democratic civilian control. One reason why this occurred was because the collective security during the Cold War fostered a permissive environment that allowed the Turkey's armed forces to intervene without sanction. As long as the international community turned a blind eye to the interventions by the Turkish Armed Forces, it legitimized the *coup d'état* in the eyes of the Turkish society. This pattern lasted until 1997 when the EU issued a "No" decision regarding Turkey's candidacy. Subsequent EU reports forced Turkey to reevaluate its civil-military relations.

Turkey's relationship with NATO and the European Economic Community (EEC) during the Cold War created expectations about its future in each organization. Turkey approached each institution differently. NATO was viewed as the primary alliance essential for collective security while the EEC was viewed as purely an economic alliance. Each association had its own set of standards and Turkey was able to negotiate with both until the mid-1990s when the values of NATO and the EU converged.

At the 1997 Luxembourg Summit, Turkey assumed it was on the fast track for candidacy. Instead five former communist nations, and Cyprus, were chosen. The official reason for the snub was because of Turkey's use of torture. This clearly indicated that having democratic practices and a signed Customs Union with the EU were no longer sufficient for membership. Now the *quality* of democracy became important. In addition to human rights, another measure associated with the quality of democracy is the concept of democratic civilian control of the armed forces (DCAF). While not specifically stated in the "Copenhagen Criteria" of 1993, democratic civilian control of the military has become the EU standard.

This chapter begins with a discussion about Turkey's relationship with the NATO and the European Community (EC) during the Cold War. These experiences shaped Turkey's expectations about its future as an EU member. The second part of this chapter explains that when the Turkish MGK made the decision to intervene in politics in 1997 it assumed it was making a decision compatible with its experiences during the Cold War and miscalculating the international reaction. Finally, this chapter concludes by explaining how a shift in the theory of civil-military relations changed the rules.

A. SHAPING EXPECTATIONS

1. Turkey's Relationship with NATO

While today Turkey has been called the "epicenter" of NATO, it must be remembered that its membership in the Alliance was not a foregone conclusion.¹⁰¹ Turkey's role in the post-WWII environment was debated among the victors. Britain wanted Turkey to play a major part in the Middle East Defense Organization (MEDO) while the United States preferred Turkey to participate in the Western Defense system.¹⁰² The impetus for bringing Turkey into NATO was the Soviet annexation of Eastern Europe.¹⁰³ Still, reservations about Turkey's "Europeaness," religion, geography, and its benefit to European security emerged. In spite of the debates, Ankara joined NATO in 1952 after two years of lobbying the alliance. Some of those same arguments have been reincarnated to fuel current debates about Turkey's membership in the EU.

Turkey has remained a reliable NATO member since its accession¹⁰⁴ through a commitment of its large standing army and acting as a buffer zone. The strategic value of Turkey's geography is obvious considering how NATO expected Turkey to counter a Russian invasion. Turkey was supposed to engage a Soviet onslaught from the East, fight

101 Scheffer, Jaap de Hoop. "NATO's 2004 Istanbul Summit: Charting the Alliance's Ongoing Adaptation to 21st Century Risks and Challenges" *Turkish Policy Quarterly*. Vol 3, No 2 (Summer 2004) p. 13.

102 William Hale, review of *The US-Turkish-NATO Middle East Connection: How the Truman Doctrine and Turkey's NATO Entry Contained the Soviets*, by George McGhee, *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 18, No. 2 (1991): 259-260.

103 Barchard, David. (1994) "Turkey and the European Union" Working Draft of a future pamphlet for the CER, p. 52. Available on the web at:
<http://www.sant.ox.ac.uk/areastudies/lecturesarchive/SEESP%20turkey%20report.pdf>

104 Turkey has been a true NATO ally. Not necessarily a consistent US ally. Incidents such as the Johnson Letter in 1964 discouraging Turkey's intervention in Cyprus; the arms embargo by the US after Turkey's intervention in 1974; and disagreements over the role Turkey would play in the 1991 Gulf War and Operation Iraqi Freedom have strained US and Turkish relations.

and retreat long enough for NATO to execute a counter offensive. To put it another way, Turkey was expected to trade territory for time.¹⁰⁵ In return, NATO provided Ankara a vehicle for military modernization as well as security. Beyond merely supplying modern military equipment, NATO and particularly the United States invited Turkey to participate in joint education and training programs. Additionally, Turkey was afforded protection under Article 5 of the NATO treaty. This was important to the Republic of Turkey to alleviate the fear that no country would come to its aid if Greece attacked.¹⁰⁶

While NATO proved to be effective during the Cold War, it was not without its ideological contradictions. NATO cultivated the appearance of an alliance of democracies but that was not always the case.¹⁰⁷ Portugal, Greece, Spain, and Turkey all wavered between authoritarian regimes and democracy during their membership.¹⁰⁸ Portugal was a non-democratic state when it originally joined NATO in 1949. To join the alliance, it was sufficient for Lisbon to simply sign a protocol stating it would “defend Western democratic ideals.”¹⁰⁹ Turkey’s membership was tied to the development of a competitive political system but not necessarily a consolidated democracy.¹¹⁰ Greece and Turkey both faltered between authoritarianism and democracy as the other alliance members turned a blind eye.¹¹¹ This indicates that the domestic political makeup of the member countries was not as important as their allegiance to the West and NATO. Democracy may have been an articulated condition for membership, it was not enforced. Despite Athens’ and Ankara’s transgressions, NATO elected not to impose significant

105 Hickok, Micahel Robert. (2000) “Hegemon Rising: The Gap Between Turkish Strategy and Military Modernization,” *Parameters*, Summer 2000, p.118. Found on the web at: <http://carlisle-www.army.mil/usawc/Parameters/00summer/hickok.htm> (Last accessed on 6 June 2005).

106 Hale, 98-101.

107 Magstadt, Thomas M. (1998) “Flawed Democracies: The Dubious Credentials of NATO’s Proposed New Members,” *Cato Policy Analysis* No. 297. Washington DC, March 1998.

108 Cizre, Umit. (2004) “Democratic Control of the Armed Forces on the Edge of Europe: The Case of Turkey.” *Renaissance of Democratic Control of Armed Forces in Contemporary Societies*. Eds. Born, Haltiner, Malesic. Baden-Baden: Nomos Verlagsgesellschaft, 2004. p. 112.

109 *Committee on Eastern Europe and Russia in NATO*. “Learning from past experience of admitting new members into NATO,” Washington, D.C.. Available on the web at: <http://www.fas.org/man/nato/ceern/index.html> (Last accessed on 7 June 2005).

110 Hale, 95.

111 This was not the case regarding Cyprus. NATO was very aware and concerned about the appearance of two allies fighting against each other. Particularly because it made the Alliance look appear weak in the international community. For this reason, NATO and the United States sanctioned Turkey after the 1974 incursion into Cyprus.

consequences – such as expulsion—on either country. The willingness of the international community to ignore Turkey's domestic politics created the permissive environment in which Turkey's civil-military relations pattern of friction, coup, and power was tolerated. This can be demonstrated by the international reactions to Turkey's military interventions.

The inner workings of Turkey's government during the Cold War were important to Washington only as far as they contributed to the NATO's stability. Stability meant security which trumped democracy. In 1960, the first *coup d'état* came as a complete surprise to the United States.¹¹² But since the perpetrators' intentions were in the interest of stability rather than self-aggrandizement, the United States was contented that Turkey would remain pro-Western and Pro-US. President Kennedy was quoted as saying “[t]he coup proves that the military can not only protect a nation, but also build a nation.”¹¹³ This implicit approval of Turkey's military actions contradicts the Western concept of civilian control of the military and demonstrates that stability was valued more than democracy.

The 1971 coup evoked little response from the international community other than a brief acknowledgement from President Nixon that he supported the coup. This was most likely because this was not an armed intervention and could easily be justified as necessary to maintain stability. The 1971 intervention failed to halt the domestic situation from sliding into chaos during the 1970s. By the end of the decade Turkey was deemed the weakest member of NATO because of its potential to become an Islamic state.¹¹⁴ The weakening of Turkey was interpreted as a weakening of the alliance. This concern was amplified by international events such as the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and the American hostage crisis in Iran. According to the mastermind of the coup, General Evren, the United States wanted the Turkish Armed Forces to intervene in order to maintain stability in the Middle East.¹¹⁵ In his book *The General's Coup in Turkey: an Inside*

¹¹² Weiker, 160.

¹¹³ Weiker, 22.

¹¹⁴ Birand, Mehmet Ali. (1987) *The General's Coup in Turkey: an Inside Story of 12 September 1980*. Translated by M. A. Dikerdem. London: Brassey's Defence Publishers, p. 185.

¹¹⁵ Demirel, 260-264.

Story of 12 September 1980, author Mehmet Ali Birand describes three additional instances where the United States administration either explicitly or implicitly supported the *coup d'état* in 1980.¹¹⁶

While the Turkish military claims that it only gets involved in subjects pertaining to national security, the definition of national security has been expanding. The 1997 National Security Policy Document (NSPD) not only included the internal and external threats to the State, but also the threats to Kemalism. Since the Council of Ministers is not privileged to the NSPD process and it is produced without civilian supervision or approval, Turkey finds itself in a civil-military situation where “no one is guarding the guardians.”

The success of the Turkish Armed Forces and the regional stability of Turkey validated this mentality during the Cold War. There was no reason for Turkey to change its procedures or structural relationship. NATO did not require, or at least ignored, civilian control of the military in the case of Turkey and at the same time, the Generals would not give up their powers.

2. Turkey's Relationship with the EU Prior to 1997

Turkey formally applied to the European Economic Community (EEC) in 1959 partly because the Greeks had already submitted an application. In the same manner in which Turkey considered NATO as a military alliance, it viewed the EEC (and later the EU) as nothing more than economic association.¹¹⁷ Nowhere in the original agreement did the quality of Turkey's democracy appear. The theory was that association based on economic ties would foster democracy over time.¹¹⁸ The arrangement between Turkey and the EC was intended to culminate with a Customs Union after Turkey complied with a number of intermediate integration stages. One of the stages was the Ankara Association Agreement signed in 1963. Article 2 of the Ankara Agreement states:

¹¹⁶ For a detailed description of events see Birand, *The General's Coup in Turkey: an Inside Story of 12 September 1980*, 126-127, 172-196.

¹¹⁷ Onis, Ziya. (2004) “Diverse but Converging Paths to European Union Membership: Poland and Turkey in Comparative Perspective.” *East European Politics and Societies*, Vol. 18, No. 3, p. 482-485.

¹¹⁸ Borzel, Tanja A. and Thomas Risse (2004) “One Size Fits All! EU Policies for the Promotion of Human Rights, Democracy, and the Rule of Law,” Unpublished paper prepared for the International Conference “Thirty Years of Third Wave Democratization: Paradigms, Lessons, and Perspectives” at the Social Science Research Center Berlin (WZB), December 10-11, 2004, p. 1- 4.

The aim of this Agreement is to promote the continuous and balanced strengthening of trade and economic relations between the Parties, while taking full account of the need to ensure an accelerated development of the Turkish economy and to improve the level of employment and the living conditions of the Turkish people.¹¹⁹

Ten years later Turkey signed a protocol that reduced the trade barriers on Turkish goods in Europe and furthered the hope of establishing a Customs Union by 1995.¹²⁰ In the meantime, President Turgut Ozal submitted Turkey's first application for full membership to the European Community in 1987. By all accounts that package was haphazardly put together and hastily tendered. The EU was shocked by the application and took two years to formally reply to the request with a qualified no.

In the 1989 decision, the Commission reaffirmed Turkey's eligibility for eventual membership and recommended Turkey try again after 1995 once Ankara addressed some practical measures.¹²¹ These items included: the completion of a Customs Union with the EU; resumption of financial cooperation including access to EU risk capital and the disbursement of the Fourth Financial Protocol;¹²² the promotion of industrial and technological cooperation and the strengthening of political and cultural links.¹²³ The decision preceded the development of the "Copenhagen Criteria" and therefore, there was no mention of Turkey's civil-military relations or the quality of its democracy. The Commission's decision reinforced the belief that the EEC was only concerned with economics.

In what appeared to be a significant leap towards membership, Turkey signed the Customs Agreement with the EU in 1995. Prime Minister Tansu Ciller was relentless in her quest to push through the agreements. She argued her case to the European Union warning that if that if Turkey did not get into the EU it would open the door for Muslim

¹¹⁹ Article 2 of the Ankara Agreement 1963. Available on the web at: <http://www.deltur.cec.eu.int/kitap/e-ankara.rtf> (Last accessed on 6 June 2005).

¹²⁰ Onis, 493.

¹²¹ Barchard, 5.

¹²² The Fourth Financial Protocol was negotiated and initialed in July 1980. The 600 Million Euros were not implemented because the protocol was not unanimously approved by the EU Council. (Financial Assistance Overview, Representation of the EU Commission to Turkey). Available on the web: <http://www.deltur.cec.eu.int/english/e-mali-view-pre.html> (Last accessed on 8 June 2005).

¹²³ Barchard, 5.

fundamentalism.¹²⁴ The Customs Union had the potential to be a success. According to a World Bank report in May 1996, Turkey could expect a 1-1.5% increase in GDP from the Customs Agreement if Turkey included a value added tax (VAT).¹²⁵ Instead, the agreement resulted in an asymmetric balance of trade in favor of the EU. Since Turkey failed to implement the VAT it created a significant loss of tax revenue.¹²⁶ However, the Customs Union was viewed as a means to an end and the terms of the agreement were irrelevant. It was regarded as only a formality to expedite EU membership negotiations.¹²⁷ In the minds of the Turkish elites, fulfilling the Customs Union was equivalent to full EU membership.¹²⁸ This would not be the case.

B. 1997: A CLASH OF EXPECTATIONS

The end of the Cold War redefined the security challenges for NATO. The Alliance shifted from being the quintessential manifestation of a true “balance of power” instrument into a conduit for democratic peace theory. The disintegration of the Soviet Union led many political scientists to predict NATO would also quickly disappear. As an institution, NATO had to transform to ensure its survival. Instead of dissolution, NATO embarked on a policy of expansion. This was due in part to the liberal belief that security could be assured through economic and political integration between democratic nations. That philosophy, energized by President Clinton’s desire to absorb some of the former Eastern Bloc nations into NATO by 1999, gave the alliance a new *raison d’etre*.¹²⁹

As NATO’s theories about security changed, so did the EU’s requirements for applicant nations. The European Parliament added a set of political criteria known as the Copenhagen Criteria in 1993. Countries seeking EU membership would have to meet the following requirements:

¹²⁴ Pope, 312.

¹²⁵ Harrison, Glenn W., Thomas F. Rutherford, and David G. Tarr (1996). “Economic Implications for Turkey of a Customs Union with the European Union,” *Policy Research Working Paper 1599*, The World Bank: Washington D.C., p. ii.

¹²⁶ Turkey, Mehmet (2002) “Turkey’s Integration with the European Union: Modalities and Limitations.” Translated by Sungur Savran. *The Politics of Permanent Crisis: Class, Ideology and State in Turkey*. Edited by Nescen Balkan and Sungur Savran. New York: Nova science Publishers Inc, 221.

¹²⁷ Onis, 16.

¹²⁸ Onis, 490.

¹²⁹ Robins, Phillip (2003) *Suits and Uniforms: Turkish Foreign Policy Since the Cold War*. Seattle: Univ. of Washington Press, p 26.

- 1) The Candidate State has achieved stability of institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, human rights and respect for and protection of minorities;
- 2) The existence of a functioning market economy, as well as the capacity to cope with competitive pressure and market forces within the Union;
- 3) The ability to take on the obligations of membership, including adherence to the aims of political economic and monetary union.¹³⁰

Leading up to the Luxembourg summit, Turkey marketed itself based on the Cold War rationale emphasizing its stability and economic prosperity rather than the fully complying with the Copenhagen Criteria. As a result, Ankara's main platform for membership relied on the following:

- 1) Turkey already had a long standing Association Agreement signed in 1963.
- 2) Turkey argued they were economically on par with or more advanced than the other former [Communist economy] applicants and that its parliamentary democracy was much more established;
- 3) Turkey offers a strategic and economic advantage in terms of protecting the southern flank of the Europe as well as being a gateway to the emerging countries in the Caucasus and Central Asia regions;
- 4) Turkey argued its application was crucial to Europe's future relations with the Islamic south of the Mediterranean. Cold shouldering of the secular and democratic Turkish republic would signal that the EU was a 'Christian club,' this would only increase the rift between the Christian north and the Islamic south in the Mediterranean region.¹³¹

It also seemed as if Turkey expected the decision on the Luxembourg round of expansion would follow the logic of the previous Mediterranean expansions which included Greece, Spain, and Portugal. None of these nations met all the elements of the Copenhagen Criteria but were allowed to join anyway. Instead, the intergovernmental conference in December of 1997 granted five former Warsaw Pact nations plus Cyprus candidate status and passed on Turkey.¹³² This "slap in the face" by the EU Commission

¹³⁰ *Official Journal of the European Union*, Council Decision of 19 May 2003, Brussels, L145/42. Available on the web at: http://europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/turkey/pdf/revised_ap_en.pdf (Last accessed on 9 June 2005).

¹³¹ Barchard, 7.

¹³² The former communist countries that were granted candidate status were: Poland, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovenia, and Estonia. Available on the European Union's Presidency Conclusions website: http://ue.eu.int/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/en/ec/032a0008.htm (Last accessed on 7 June 2005).

was due in part to a clash of expectations. Luxembourg's Prime Minister, Claude Juncker, issued the decision on behalf of the EU summit saying "It cannot be that a country where torture is still practiced has a place at the European Union table."¹³³ While the EU officially cited Turkey's use of torture as the main reason for denying membership, it was really about the quality of Turkey's democracy. As previously mentioned, Turkey expected to gain candidate status because it had fulfilled what it presumed were the requirements outlined in the EU's decision in 1989. The EU, on the other hand, expected Turkey to comply with the Copenhagen Criteria. Of concern to the EU were Turkey's human rights, the situation in southeastern Anatolia and Islamic fundamentalism.¹³⁴ In addition, the Europeans questioned the democratic nature of a country that could suppress an entire political party which Turkey had done after each intervention.¹³⁵ The rules for membership had changed. Having a procedural democracy was no longer good enough for admission into the "club." Now the emphasis was on the quality of democracy of which human rights and civil-military relations are more significant than just competitive political elections.

1. The Fallout from the Luxembourg IGC

According to the *1998 Regular Report from the Commission on Turkey's Progress towards Accession*, Turkey reacted negatively to the Luxembourg decision. Prime Minister Yilmaz claimed that Turkey received discriminatory treatment¹³⁶ compared with the other applicant countries and as a result, Ankara would no longer participate in the European Conference process. Turkey suspended its political dialogue with the Union. Therefore, Turkey no longer wished to discuss issues such as relations between Greece and Turkey, Cyprus or human rights. From Ankara's perspective, EU-Turkey relations would be based only on the existing texts of the Customs Union.

¹³³ McMahon, Janet (1998), "Facts for your files: December 1997 Chronology of U.S.-Middle East Relations," *Washington Report on Middle East Affairs*. Available on the web at: <http://www.washington-report.org/backissues/0398/> (Last accessed on 7 June 2005).

¹³⁴ Barchard, 5-7.

¹³⁵ Barchard, 18.

¹³⁶ The EU report was much kinder towards the Turkish PM. According to the Turkish Daily News on 17 December 1997, Prime Minister called German President Helmut Kohl a "racist." Available on the web at: http://www.turkishdailynews.com.tr/oldeditions.php?dir=03_18_98&fn=DOM.HTM (Last accessed 8 June 2005).

The “No” decision handed out at the Luxembourg conference did not immediately result in a change in Turkey’s civil-military relations. It was only after a series of regular EU reports regarding Turkey’s progress towards accession that the topic of civil-military relations was addressed. When the EU became involved, it immediately targeted the National Security Council for reforms. The reason why the EU was so specific about the reforms was due to a parallel shift in the theory of civil-military relations.

C. CHANGE IN THE THEORY OF CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS

The shake up of the international *status quo* after 1991 had a profound effect on the concept of democratic control of the armed forces (DCAF). There was no change to the philosophy that civilians should control the armed forces, but the end of the Cold War led to different theories on how this should be done. The dominant theory during the Cold War asserted that maximizing military professionalism would lead to civilian control of the military.¹³⁷ In some ways Huntington’s definition of civilian control was tautological. For example, his definition of professionalism meant the military would accept subordination to its civilian government. However, this is one of the characteristics of a professional army. For the Western nations the concept of civil-military relations seemed to be settled. The constant threat of the Soviet Union inherently led to a convergence of priorities for both the politicians and the armed forces. This common threat made it easier to achieve democratic civilian control of the armed forces.

When the Warsaw Pact disbanded in the early 1990s, the central eastern European (CEE) nations faced a different problem. Their militaries were accustomed to civilian control, but only by authoritarian governments. Their armed forces had been politicized and routinely acted as instruments of the Communist political parties.¹³⁸ This created a challenge for NATO. Not only did NATO have to find a way to absorb its former enemies, it also required them to accept democratic civilian control of their military. The problem that emerged following the Cold War was that the armed forces in the central and eastern European countries came to represent oppression instead of modernization. The lack of trust in the military during Communist rule and the cost of democratization

¹³⁷ Huntington, Samuel P. (2003) *The Soldier and the State: The Theory and Politics of Civil-Military Relations*, Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, p. 8.

¹³⁸ For example, the military officers were forced to be members of the Communist party. See: Heper and Guney, 635

provoked the civilian governments of the CEE countries to slash military budgets and sacrifice the quantity and quality of their armed forces.

As a solution, NATO focused on developing institutions to promote civilian control. This is what Andrew Cottey, Timothy Edmunds, and Anthony Forster consider the “first generation” issues of civil-military reform.¹³⁹ These include the founding of institutions such as constitutional structures and the development of clear lines of responsibility between the military and the government.¹⁴⁰ Like NATO, the EU tied the status of civil-military relations to membership. In order to comply with the requirements, the CEE countries adopted institutions with roles and missions based on the Western definition of civilian control. This new vision of civil-military relations meant that a country must not only possess civilian control of the military but it must “look European” as well. This was easier said than done. The immediate problem facing the CEE states was getting the institutions to work correctly. Even after 2000, it was evident that just because the institutions existed did not guarantee civilian control. The next step was to ensure the institutions worked properly. The new theory of civil-military relations, the regime theory, regarded civilian control as a process. It also acknowledged that the military should occupy a significant position in the defense decision making process.¹⁴¹ The new theory regarding democratic civilian control of the armed forces required “principles, norms, rules and decision making procedures around which actor expectations converge.”¹⁴² Simply having the institutions was no longer sufficient.

The CEE countries benefited from the establishment of new institutions and the guidance from NATO under the Partnership for Peace (PfP) program. On the other hand, this analysis created a problem for Turkey. The National Security Council (MGK) had become the dominant institution in Turkey’s politics. It was also the main instrument

139 Cottey, Andrew, Timothy Edmunds, and Anthony Forster. (2002) “The Second Generation Problematic: Rethinking Democracy and Civil-Military Relations.” *Armed Forces & Society*, Vol 29, No. 1, Fall 2002, pp. 31-56: 49.

140 Forster, Anthony. (2002) “West Looking East: Civil-Military Relations Policy Transfer in Central and Eastern Europe.” *Working Paper Series--No 52*. Geneva: Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces, p. 9.

141 Bland, Douglas (2004) “‘Your Obedient Servant’: The Military’s Role in the Civil Control of Armed Forces,” *Renaissance of Democratic Control of Armed Forces in Contemporary Societies*. Edited by HansBorn, Karl Haltiner, and Marjan Malesic. Baden-Baden: Nomos, p. 25.

142 Bland, Douglas. (1999) “A Unified Theory of Civil-Military Relations,” *Armed Forces & Society* 26, 1 (Fall 1999): 21.

though which the military could impose its political will. In order to meet the political requirements for admission into the EU, Turkey would have to dismantle the very institution that kept the nation on track for Westernization over the last 40 odd years.

IV. REVERSING THE DOMESTIC PATTERN

This chapter explains how the EU-Turkey negotiations after the 1997 Luxembourg summit led to the approval of Turkey's 7th "Harmonization" legislation package. These reforms, passed in the summer of 2003, were formulated to reduce the political influence of the generals and establish democratic civilian control. This task was forced upon Turkey when civilian control of the military became tied to its EU membership bid. In its regular reports, the European Union specifically cited the form and function of the National Security Council (MGK) as a barrier to democratic civilian control of the armed forces. This obligated Turkey to make significant changes to the council which convened at least once per month from 1961 until 2004.

Trying to establish civilian control over the armed forces was different in Turkey than in either the central and eastern European (CEE) countries or the Mediterranean nations of Portugal, Greece, and Spain. One reason is because the history of the armed forces matters. The military played an important role in the development of the Turkish State and occupied an esteemed position in society. During Communist rule, the military in the CEE nations represented oppression and stagnation. In the Mediterranean states, the armed forces did not play as important a role in the development of these countries compared with Turkey. As a result, promoting DCAF in these nations was a matter of building effective institutions. Once built, DCAF was expected to follow. Turkey, on the other hand, faced the opposite dilemma. It had to dismantle the military institutions which prevented DCAF.

The solution seems quite simple. For Turkey to achieve civilian control of its armed forces, it should remove the military's instruments of political power such as the MGK. A report to the European *Committee on Foreign Affairs, Human Rights, Common Security and Defence Policy* concluded:

...it will be necessary in the long term to abolish the National Security Council in its current form and position; ...the desired structural change will be very hard [for the military] to swallow.”¹⁴³

The first part of this chapter details the different EU reports and decisions that led to the 7th Harmonization package. Excerpts from the regular EU reports and decisions provide insight into how the National Security Council was physically changed. The second part of this chapter explains how the reforms affected the character of Turkey’s civil-military relations by returning to the DCAF diagram developed in the first chapter.

A. DISMANTLING THE NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

The friction, coup, power pattern of Turkey’s CMR and the attitudes of the international community towards Turkey during the Cold War created the permissive environment that legitimized the *coup d’état* as a tactic.

The attempt to dismantle the National Security Council can be tracked in three stages. The first stage was discourse. This encompassed the development of “reports and retorts” between the European Commission and Turkey. Delving into the reports and Turkey’s responses, or lack thereof, demonstrates the manner in which the EU expected Turkey to change. However, it was not until General Hilmi Ozkok became the Chief of the Generals Staff (CGS) that any substantive action occurred. General Ozkok’s selection as the CGS represented a step forward in Westernization and EU membership. Not only was he instrumental in championing the reforms to the MGK, but he had an important impact on the future of Turkey’s officer corps. He filled key positions with reformers and “retired” the hardliners.¹⁴⁴ General Ozkok has been widely credited with the reforms. MEP Arie Oostlander, whose reports did not have a lot to praise for Turkey, referred to Ozkok as the “intelligent Supreme Commander.”¹⁴⁵ The final stage of dismantling the MGK was the passage of the 7th Harmonization package. While the reforms were passed by the Turkish Grand National Assembly (TGNA), the legislation was actually developed at the executive level. When all is said and done, this was not “good governance” associated with democratic civilian control of the military, but rather a set of “exit

¹⁴³ Oostlander, Arie M. (2003) DRAFT REPORT on Turkey’s Application for Membership of the EU. Committee on Foreign Affairs, Human Rights, Common Security and Defence Policy. March 2003. Available on the web at: <http://www.oostlander.net/> (Last accessed on 7 June 2005).

¹⁴⁴ Ulsever, Cunyet (2003) “Thank you General Sarisik!” Turkish Column Attacks Left-Wing Writers, Ret. Generals for Opposing Change. Financial Times Information. Global News Wire, 28 Aug 2003.

¹⁴⁵ MEP Arie Oostlander, interview by author via e-mail, 27 May 2005.

criteria” for the military negotiated between the Prime Minister and the CGS.¹⁴⁶ The changes made were the changes the military was willing to give up.

1. Discourse

The dialogue between the EU and Turkey on the subject of civil-military relations concentrated on the form and function of the MGK. Unlike the EU’s general comments about torture in Turkey, the European Union was specific about reducing the role of the generals in politics. The philosophy was that once the institutions were changed there would be a corresponding change in the function of the council. The EU published yearly regular reports on Turkey’s progress towards accession from 1998 to 2004. The information for the regular reports was gathered from voluntary sources from within the country, EU Parliament discussions, and member of European Parliament (MEP) Committee reports. These reports served as Turkey’s report cards. They measured how closely and efficiently Turkey implemented the suggestions outlined in the previous reports.¹⁴⁷ One example of how the EU obtains its information is the *Report on Turkey’s Membership of the EU*. The Committee on Foreign Affairs, Human Rights, Common Security and Defense Policy delegated authority to a member of the European Parliament to conduct a fact finding mission in Turkey. The member from the European Parliament conducted interviews with representatives from universities, press, minority groups, politicians, religious representatives, etc. Only the military turned down the chance to meet with the MEP. The military explained that since it was above politics, it would not be appropriate to meet with the representative from the EU.¹⁴⁸ The Draft Report on the subject released in March of 2003 brought severe critiques from the government of Turkey and its military. Of considerable controversy was the finding that Kemalism was not compatible with the EU standards. Due to the strong criticism, the statements

¹⁴⁶ MEP Arie Oostlander, interview by author via e-mail, 27 May 2005.

¹⁴⁷ For a detailed description of the reporting procedures, see 2000 Regular Report from the Commission on Turkey’s Progress towards Accession, 8 November 2000.

¹⁴⁸ Report of Study visit of Arie Oostlander to Turkey. On Turkey’s Progress to EU Membership. Interviews conducted between 26-30 November 2002. Available on the web at: <http://www.oostlander.net/rapporten/030314e.html> (Last accessed on 2 June 2005).

regarding Kemalism were removed from the final report.¹⁴⁹ The danger with conducting interviews is finding the right people to provide the information. In the realm of gathering information for negotiations, the adage “garbage in, garbage out” still applies.¹⁵⁰

The *1998 Regular Report from the Commission on Turkey’s Progress towards Accession* contained the first account of the status of Turkey’s civil-military relations. On the role of the MGK in politics, the report stated...

The existence of this body [MGK] shows that, despite a basic democratic structure, the Turkish constitution allows the Army to play a civil role and to intervene in every area of political life.¹⁵¹

The subsequent two EU regular reports criticized Turkey for its lack of progress towards achieving civilian control of the armed forces. The failure to do so was blamed on the existence of the MGK.¹⁵² The next yearly report echoed the same critiques and included the authority of the military courts as an additional roadblock to democracy.

Through the National Security Council, the Military continues to have an important influence in many areas of political life. The National Security Council continues to play a major role in political life. While the emergency courts system remains in place, the replacement of the military judge by a civilian one in State Security Courts, represents a clear improvement in terms of independence of the judiciary.¹⁵³

The 2000 Regular Report also issued a third warning regarding the lack of progress in achieving civilian control over the military. This report also questioned the alignment of the Turkish General Staff and the Defense Minister. Unlike the other European states, the TGS is not subordinate to the Minister of National Defense (MND).

149 In an e-mail interview, Mr. Oostlander added that after he published his draft report in March of 2003, he was visited by “people representing the huge military interests in enterprises [sic]. They tried to explain that these interests should be considered as the insurance association of the army!” MEP Arie Oostlander, interview by author via e-mail, 27 May 2005.

150 Mr. Oostlander says he was careful whom he picked to interview and stated that he sought diversity in his interviewees. For his information regarding civil-military relations, he spoke with a number of “excellent” professors in Turkey. Interview by author via e-mail, 27 May 2005.

151 Commission of the European Communities (1998), Regular Report 1998, from the Commission on Turkey’s Progress Towards Accession. Brussels: Commission of the European Communities, p 14.

152 Commission of the European Communities (1999), Regular Report 1999, from the Commission on Turkey’s Progress Towards Accession. Brussels: Commission of the European Communities, p. 25. and Commission of the European Communities (2000), Regular Report 2000, from the Commission on Turkey’s Progress Towards Accession. Brussels: Commission of the European Communities, p. 19-25.

153 Commission of the European Communities (2000), Regular Report 2000, p. 10.

Instead the CGS and the MND share a relationship of close coordination. From this analysis, it appears each report is gathering more evidence in order to force a modification in the MGK's role in Turkey's politics. The 2000 document was also critical of the military's influence in the Council of Higher Education. A member of the General Staff sits as a member of its board. The findings of this report deemed the role inappropriate for the military.

Until March of 2001, the EU reports were non-binding and went without consequence. The important document that made civilian control of the military an important criterion was the EU Council of Minister's decision concerning Turkey's prospects for membership. The decision on 8 March 2001 determined that "improved relations between the military and the politicians were one of the medium term political requirements." Over the next three years, Turkey would have to fulfill the Copenhagen Criteria for EU membership. The guidance in the report was crystal clear:

Align the constitutional role of the National Security Council as an advisory body to the Government in accordance with the practice of EU Member States.¹⁵⁴

As part of the negotiation process for accession, Turkey responded with its own National Plan for the Acceptance of the Acquis Communautaire (NPAA) in 2001. The 500+ page document, negotiated between the EU and Prime Minister Ecevit, has only two sentences dedicated to the subject of civil-military relations and the role of the MGK.

The National Security Council, which is a constitutional body, has the status of a consultative body in areas of national security. Relevant articles of the Constitution and other legislation will be reviewed in the medium term to define more clearly the structure and the functions of this Council.¹⁵⁵

This response was little more than an acknowledgement of the critiques outlined in the previous reports. It is interesting how this short, inconsequential paragraph evolved into the reform packages passed in July of 2003.

¹⁵⁴ Official Journal of the European Union, L 85/19.

¹⁵⁵ Republic of Turkey, Prime Ministry, and the Secretariat General for EU Affairs. *Turkish National Programme for the Adoption of the Acquis*, Ankara, p. 26. Available on the web at: <http://www.abgs.gov.tr> (Last accessed 7 June 2005).

The published 2001 regular report concluded that despite the change in the composition of the MGK, there has been “little sign of increased civilian control over the military.”¹⁵⁶ This was also in spite of the powers granted to it in 1982 had been rolled back.

In 2001 the composition of the NSC was changed to make the military members a minority. It also changed the stated role of the NSC reducing it to an advisory board rather than the powers it was given with the 1982 constitution.¹⁵⁷

The composition of the MGK made no difference in its function because of the strong informal power of the military according to Professor Umit Cizre of Bilkent University. In an unpublished interview between Dutch MEP Arie Oostlander and Professor Cizre stated “...it actually does not make any difference making the number [of civilians in the MGK] 100! The role did not diminish, as the role of the military has nothing to do with the institutional set up of the [MGK].”¹⁵⁸ The amendment increased the number of civilians in the MGK to nine while the generals remained at five.

The constitutional amendment introducing changes to the composition and role of the National Security Council has been put into practice. Nonetheless, these changes do not appear to have modified the way in which the National Security Council operates in practice.¹⁵⁹

The reason why there was no change to the function of the organization is because the council makes its decisions based on consensus rather than by a majority vote.

The period between 1998 and 2002 was filled with a lot of talk, but no action with respect to the role of the military in Turkey’s society. It was not until the appointment of General Ozkok to the position of CGS that action started.

2. Action

General Hilmi Ozkok took over the reins of the Turkish Armed Forces on August 28th, 2002. However his ascension was not without a fight. The outgoing CGS, General Kivrikoglu tried to extend his own tenure for another year but was denied during the meeting of Turkey’s High Military Council held every August to determine the

¹⁵⁶ Commission of the European Communities (2001), Regular Report 2001, 16.

¹⁵⁷ Commission of the European Communities (2001), Regular Report 2001, 19

¹⁵⁸ Report of Study visit of Arie Oostlander to Turkey 26-30 November 2002.

¹⁵⁹ Commission of the European Communities (2002), Regular Report 2002, 138.

promotions and the positions of the highest ranking officers in the armed forces. Usually the promotion system follows a standard pattern. Historically, the former Land Forces Commander (KKK) becomes the new Chief of the General Staff when the latter retires. The new general replacing the outgoing KKK commander is expected to be next in line for the CGS position. In this meeting, the outgoing CGS tried to block Ozkok from the position. Since he could not stop the promotion, the Command of the Land Forces went to General Bukanyet who is a hard-lined ally with the outgoing CGS.

General Ozkok, who has spent a great deal of his career outside Turkey, is viewed as a proponent of reforms in order to get into the EU. But at the same time, Ozkok made it clear that any departure from the principle of secularism could trigger a reaction from the military. So far during his watch, Turkey passed the 6th and 7th Harmonization packages which will be discussed in detail in the next section. One year after assuming command, Ozkok executed his own “mini purge” of the generals. At the conclusion of a three day meeting of the HMC, General Tuncay Kilinc, the MGK General Secretary was among those slated for retirement. His position was given to Lieutenant General Sukru Sariisik who was promoted to full General and moved from his command of the 5th Army Corps.¹⁶⁰ This announcement came just days after the 7th Harmonization package was passed by the parliament but not yet approved by President Necdet Sezer. General Kilinc, and his Chief Adviser were outspoken critics of the changes to the MGK. General Agaoglu, adviser to the MGK Secretary, acknowledged the seventh harmonization package by-passed the MGK for comment. To him, this indicated the position of the Secretary General was abrogated and he was sure the entire MGK would “dissolve in 3 months.”¹⁶¹ Press reports indicated a split in the military. According to K Gajenda Singh, India’s former Ambassador to Turkey, “[t]he armed forces are unhappy if not livid with

160 “Army promotions announced; new security council head appointed.” BBC Worldwide Monitoring. The information was a text of a commercial NTV report on August 4, 2003. Istanbul Turkey. LexisNexis document.

161 “Turkish General Says 7th EU Package Abrogated Security Council’s Secretariat” Financial Times Information. Global News Wire-Asia Africa Intelligence Wire. July 28th, 2003.

the reform package” and its diminished role.¹⁶² Singh also seemed surprised that the politicians had taken the risky course of action to “emasculate” the military.

General Ozkok oversaw additional actions that included the following changes highlighted by the 2003 Regular Report on Turkey’s progress. The reforms adopted in 2001 later became part of the Constitution.

The advisory nature of the NSC was confirmed in a law implementing the amendment of October 2001 relating to Article 118 of the Constitution, which also increased the number of civilians in the NSC. In an amendment to the Law on the National Security Council the provision that "the NSC will report to the Council of Ministers the views it has reached and its suggestions" has been abrogated. The representative of the NSC in the Supervision Board of Cinema, Video and Music has been removed by an amendment to the relevant Law. However, there remains a representative of the National Security Council on other civilian boards such as the High Audio-Visual Board (RTÜK) and the High- Education Board (YÖK).¹⁶³

The reform measures enacted in the TAF under the leadership of General Ozkok make it clear he is for membership in the European Union and that he has been successful in making the military appear to be “acting as one.” On April 20th, 2005, General Ozkok addressed the Turkish War Colleges. The subjects in his speech ventured into the political realm. The General’s language seemed more appropriate for the leader of a nation instead of a General addressing his troops. Ozkok acknowledged the strength of the EU and affirmed Turkey’s desire to become a full member of the EU, but not at the expense of the country’s dignity.

Turkey’s interest lies in being a full member of the EU... However, I would like to reiterate that the right thing to do and the thing that we desire is to be a full member of the EU with our dignity and commitment. At the end of a long and challenging process of negotiations, with the priority given to the realization of the mutual harmonization; openness,

162 Singh, K Gajenda. (2003) “Turkish Military’s Diminished Role: Any Lessons for Pakistan?” South Asia Analysis Group paper No. 759. Available on the web at: <http://www.saag.org/papers8/paper759.html> (Last accessed on 2 June 2005).

163 Commission of the European Communities (2003), Regular Report 2003, from the Commission on Turkey’s Progress Towards Accession. Brussels: Commission of the European Communities.

transparency, mutual respect, good will, mutual understanding and balance between the risks undertaken and the stage reached are of vital importance.¹⁶⁴

An important element of his speech was the military's recognition that the security environment had changed. Ozkok said "[r]ecently, economic power has become the most distinctive element of national power. What is most striking today is the fact that 'security' and 'economic development' are accepted as the two very closely related concepts."¹⁶⁵ This is significant because it shows the change in preferences by the military towards getting into the EU. Following the reforms, General Ozkok made a gesture which signaled he was "prepared to accept the rearrangement of the relationship between the nation's armed forces and the civilian administration in order to move towards conformation with EU standards."¹⁶⁶ "By not rejecting change, Ozkok confirmed that the TGS recognizes the importance of avoiding the perception that it is an impediment on the path to the EU."¹⁶⁷

Given the number of changes and the relative ease with which they were accomplished, it begs the question: Why did the reforms occur now instead of before 1998? The military recognizes that greater than 75% of the population support EU membership. The remaining 25% is not opposed to EU membership. They just distrust the EU's double standards. The armed forces also understand its reputation in society is in jeopardy if it is perceived as a roadblock to membership.¹⁶⁸ In this case, the military actually "wins by losing." At the expense of losing some of its formal power to intervene in politics, the Turkish Armed Forces strengthens its informal power in society.

3. Harmonization?

Harmonization is the process of aligning a country's laws with the requirements of the EU. The concept was developed with the intention of expediting the process of

164 The speech given by the Commander of the Turkish Armed Forces (TAF), General Hilmi Ozkok at the Turkish War Colleges, Istanbul, Delivered on 20 April 2005. Available on the web at: <http://www.tsk.mil.tr/eng/konusma/harpakademisikonusma20Nisan.htm> (Last accessed 7 June 2005).

165 The speech given....Hilmi Ozkok.

166 Ciftci, Seda. (2003) "Reforming for Europe." Turkey Update. Washington D.C: Turkey Project Center for Strategic and International Studies, p 2.

167 Ciftci (2003), 2.

168 Keskintepe, Reha (2004) "Turkey's EU Membership: Prospects and Implications." NSF Review, Summer 2004, p 14.

expansion. The 7th Harmonization package approved by Turkey's parliament, at least in theory, rolls back the political role of the military to the levels of the 1950s before the MGK was created.¹⁶⁹

The Turkish Grand National Assembly worked hard to pass through the 6th and 7th Harmonization packages designed to bring Turkish laws even closer to the European laws. Although President Sezer vetoed the 6th harmonization package that targeted the strict anti-terror laws of the government and liberalized measures for the Kurdish speaking population, the parliament was able to garner enough votes to override the veto. In order to get the bill passed, Prime Minister Erdogan sold the idea to the Grand National Assembly by invoking the desires of the military by saying that "How can you know better than the [Turkish General Staff]? They would know best. They want it this way. So, vote accordingly."¹⁷⁰ The bill was approved the last week in July. Almost directly on the heels of that vote came the 7th Harmonization package. These reforms adopted in July - August 2003 introduced some fundamental changes to the duties, functions and composition of the MGK. An amendment to the Law on the National Security Council (No 2495) abolished the extended executive and supervisory powers of the Secretary General of the MGK. The Secretary General no longer has the authority to follow up on the President or the Prime Minister regarding the implementation of any recommendation made by the MGK. This was clearly in response to the 1997 "post modern" coup where the MGK pressured Prime Minister Erbakan to put into action the recommendations to curb the rise of political Islam.

Erbakan's resignation and the banning of the *Refah Parti* (RP) in 1997 temporarily subdued the armed forces' struggle with the rise in radical Islam. The 2002 election was almost an exact repeat of the 1996 election. The middle of the road parties failed to gain electoral support which allowed the Justice and Development Party (*Adalet ve Kalkinma Parti* -- AKP) to win a majority in Parliament. However, there are two differences between the results of the 1996 and 2002 elections. First, the AKP achieved a majority in Parliament despite only winning 34% of the vote. The CHP came in second and no other political party crossed the 10% threshold required to gain a seat in the Grand

¹⁶⁹ Singh. 1-3.

¹⁷⁰ Ciftci (2003), 1.

National Assembly.¹⁷¹ This gave the AKP over a 2:1 advantage in the assembly.¹⁷² The second difference was that Turkey was now a candidate for the European Union.

The AKP had known Islamic ties and had the least interest in joining the EU. Another outcome of the election was the election of Recep Tayyip Erdogan as Turkey's new Prime Minister. In 1998 Erdogan, who was formerly the mayor of Istanbul, spent 4 months in prison for publicly reciting a poem with "nationalist content and ethnic motifs."¹⁷³ Erdogan was a disciple of Erbakan until they ideologically split ways after the "soft" coup of 1997. He is a devout practicing Muslim but has so far proven to be moderate.¹⁷⁴ Without the watchful eyes of the EU, his election by Parliament to become the Prime Minister could have reenergized the friction, coup, power pattern. The religiously based constituency of the AKP remained "Euroskeptic" throughout the campaign. After it won the elections, its leadership pushed the EU membership agenda.¹⁷⁵

Prime Minister Erdogan inherited the harmonization process already in progress. In less than one year of his administration, regulations modifying the tasks of the Office of the Secretary General were adopted. One of the most important changes was that the Secretary General will no longer be reserved exclusively for a military officer. Instead, the Secretariat would be nominated by the President and approved by the Prime Minister. In addition, the Secretariat General would have considerably less powers. Rather than being able to speak on a number of different topics with impunity, the Secretariat General would only be responsible for setting the agenda for the Security Council meetings. According to press reports, General Ozkok and PM Erdogan were at odds over the issue of a civilian Secretary General at this point in time. While the military was not opposed

171 Insel, Ahmet. (2003) "The AKP and Normalizing Democracy in Turkey," *The South Atlantic Quarterly*, 102.2/3 (2003). Found on the web at: http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/south_atlantic_quarterly/v102/102.2insel.htm (Last accessed 6 June 2005).

172 The AKP had 363 seats while the CHP had 178. Carkoglu, Ali. (2002) "Turkey's November 2002 Elections: A New Beginning?," *Middle East Review of International Affairs*, Vol 6, No. 4 (December 2002), p. 32.

173 Insel, 197.

174 Moderate is a relative term. Unlike Erbakan who wanted to separate from NATO and the EU, Erdogan has supported membership in both organizations. However, Erdogan has publicly supported the issues of women being able to wear headscarves in public buildings and pushed for making adultery a crime. Neither issue was passed by the government.

175 Carkoglu, Ali. (2002) "Turkey's November 2002 Elections: A New Beginning?" *Middle East Review of International Affairs*, Vol. 6, No. 4 (December 2002), p. 30.

to the idea, they wanted a one year moratorium on the decision. True to the agreement, the post of the Secretary General was relinquished to Yigit Alpogan a former Turkish Ambassador to Greece in August of 2004.¹⁷⁶ Additionally, the frequency of the meetings of the MGK has been modified. The council will under normal circumstances be convened every two months instead of monthly. A move such as this may be an attempt to slowly remove the MGK from the decision making process all together.

The Court of Auditors is now authorized to “audit accounts and transactions of all types of organizations including the state properties owned by the armed forces.”¹⁷⁷ The audits are still restricted under Article 160 of the Constitution under which the confidentiality of the national defense is foreseen. Even with the ability to audit the armed forces, the military continues to enjoy a substantial autonomy in preparing and establishing the defense budget as well as in public procurement in areas related to defense.¹⁷⁸

The EU has voiced concern over three additional prerogatives of the military. First, the military controls two extra-budgetary funds. One of the funds relates to a defense industry support fund responsible for the allocation of defense resources. The second concern is the sheer magnitude of military spending. As of 2003, national defense consumed approximately 7% of the budget.

Besides the MGK, the EU is concerned about the armed forces ability to exert influence through a series of informal mechanisms. On various occasions’ military members of the MGK expressed their opinions about political, social and foreign policy matters in public speeches, statements to the media and declarations. This still continues. However, it appears the EU does not mind the situation as long as the pro-EU and pro-reform messages from Gen Ozkok continue.

¹⁷⁶ Turkish Press Review, 8/19/2004, available on the web at: <http://www.byegm.gov.tr/YAYINLARIMIZ/CHR/ING2004/08/04x08x19.HTM#%207> (Last accessed on June 3, 2005).

¹⁷⁷ Salmoni, Barak (2003) “Turkey’s Summer 2003 Legislative Reforms: EU Avalanche, Civil-Military Revolution, or Islamist assertion?” Strategic Insight, Vol II, 9 (September 2003). Available on the web at: <http://www.ccc.nps.navy.mil/si/sept03/europe.asp> (Last accessed on 3 June 2005).

¹⁷⁸ Commission of the European Communities (2003), Regular Report 2003, 19-25.

Overall, the Constitutional amendments were intended to significantly modify the functioning of the National Security Council. But in order to align civilian control of the military with practice in EU members, these reforms must be effectively implemented.¹⁷⁹

The *Regular Report on Turkey's Progress towards Accession* in October 2004 makes the following statements regarding civil-military relations:

On civil-military relations, the government has increasingly asserted its control over the military. In order to enhance budgetary transparency the Court of Auditors was granted permission to audit military and defense expenditures. Extra-budgetary funds have been included in the general budget, allowing for full parliamentary control. In August 2004, for the first time a civilian was appointed Secretary General of the National Security Council. The process of fully aligning civil-military relations with EU practice is underway; nevertheless, the armed forces in Turkey continue to exercise influence through a series of informal mechanisms.¹⁸⁰

It appears the Turkish government and the military have negotiated a way to adopt the institutional changes required. The question becomes whether or not the changes will stick. In his Strategic Insights Article, Barak Salmoni muses whether or not the reforms of summer 2003 represent a “revolution in civil-military relations.”¹⁸¹ At the time of his article it was too early to tell. After almost 2 years since the reforms, it appears this was not quite a revolution but only a first step towards civilian control.

B. CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS AFTER THE HARMONIZATION PACKAGES

After the implementation of the institutional reforms required by the European Union, what is the status of democratic civilian control of its armed forces (DCAF)? This section empirically shows how rolling back the military's instruments of power, namely the National Security Council, brought the status of DCAF closer to the ideal of civilian control. But because of the military's informal powers, the armed forces are not fully

¹⁷⁹ Commission of the European Communities (2003), Regular Report 2003, 19.

¹⁸⁰ Commission of the European Communities (2004), Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament, Recommendation of the European Commission on Turkey's progress towards accession. Brussels: Commission of the European Communities, p. 11.

¹⁸¹ Salmoni, 1-6.

under civilian control. The 2004 EU report on Turkey's progress towards accession echoes these remarks. However, the reforms must have been "good enough" since Turkey has gained EU candidacy.

There are two opinions on why civilian control still has not been achieved. According to former European Parliament member, Arie Oostlander, Turkey needs more institutional changes. In his opinion, Turkey should have continued with reforms by subordinating the National Security Council to the Minister of National Defense and opening the military budget to full control of the parliament. In addition, the parliament should have access to the military's OYAK funds.¹⁸² Breaking down the structures should lead to changes in the norms and principles of the military allowing it to accept civilian control.

On the other hand, political science professor Umit Cizre suggests the EU is too focused on institutional changes. According to Cizre, the European Union suffers from "institutional bias." She explains that the bias displayed by NATO and the EU in the age of expansion to the central and eastern European countries has carried over into the EU expansion regarding Turkey. The "mere institutional reform of civil-military relations will often fail to identify and respond to an underlying web of unspoken and maybe invisible systems of sustenance that legitimize the military's ability to influence [politics]."¹⁸³ Instead, the answer lies in creating a new military culture willing to accept and respect civilian control.¹⁸⁴ New laws and constitutional amendments alone will not appreciably change Turkey's established pattern of civil-military relations. Taking this concept to the extreme, it would mean challenging the military's legitimacy as the guardian of the state and the principles of Kemalism as defined by the military.

Both perspectives have merit and are essential to achieve civilian control. It is clear the EU does have an institutional bias. Part of this may be because it is easier to measure changes in structure than it is in culture. In other words, success should not just be measured by the structure and institutions present. It is also important that they operate correctly. However, the principle of democratic civilian control will not persist without a

¹⁸² E-mail interview with the author 27 May 2005.

¹⁸³ Cizre (2004), 115.

¹⁸⁴ Cizre (2004), 115.

change in culture. In the case of Turkey, dismantling the National Security Council is only the first step in reversing the friction, coup, and power cycle that turned the military into the most prominent actor in Turkey's politics.

The 7th Harmonization package had the effect of removing the decision-making structures of the military and reducing its formal power. As demonstrated in Figure 3, the status of DCAF empirically shifted from its value in 1997 to the position in 2004. Because the instruments of power were removed, there was a corresponding reduction in friction.

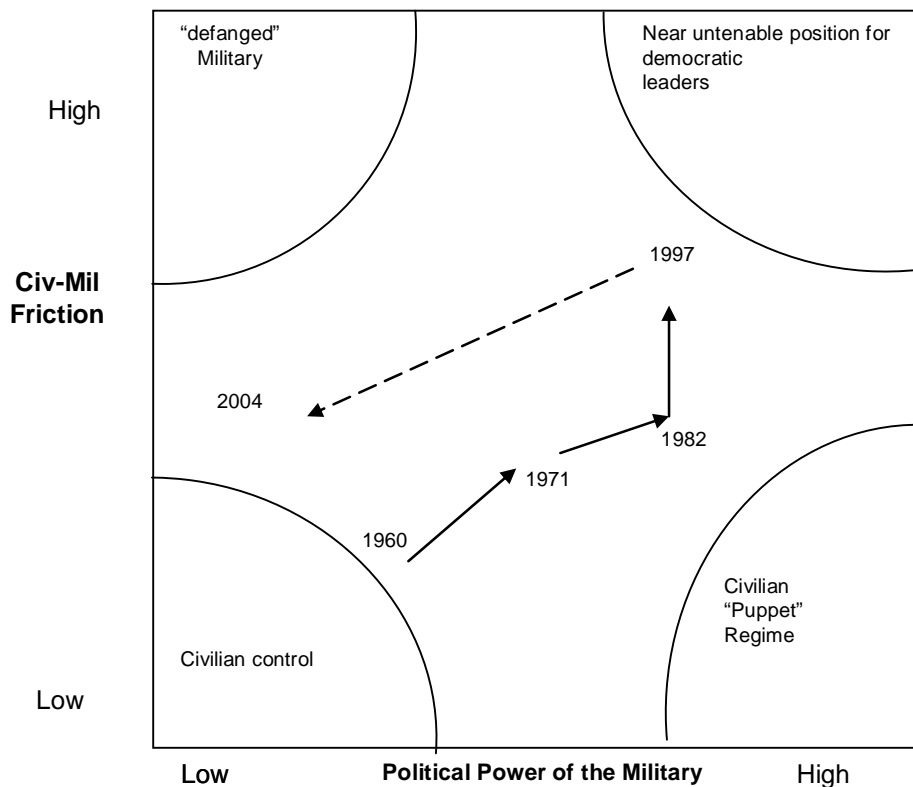


Figure 3. Turkey's Civil-Military Relations in 2004

It is important to understand that the impetus for the changes to Turkey's 43 year old National Security Council came from the EU and not from within the Turkish population, politicians, or the armed forces. At the same time, the legislation was not written by the "omniscient" EU but came about through a series of negotiations between the military and the Prime Minister. In this case, General Ozkok met with the Prime

Minister and unlike 1971 or 1997 the armed forces agreed to compromise.¹⁸⁵ The key word is “compromise” which means the armed forces relinquished only what it was willing to surrender. For example, the military held fast on its desire to keep an officer as the Secretary General of the MGK for a one year transition period.

The changes agreed to by the military do not represent a change in its desire to be the guardian of society. Instead it represents a change in tactics. Rather than contesting the AKP and the civilian politicians on every issue, the military has adopted a “wait and see” approach. The Turkish Armed Forces have relinquished as much power as they are willing to give. From their perspective it is now up to the politicians to run the government correctly. To use a basketball analogy, the military has shifted from a “man-to-man” defense to a “zone” defense. Rather than challenge the politicians on every issue, the military is going to let the government bend, but not break. Chapter V outlines four different scenarios for the future of Turkey’s civil-military relations.

¹⁸⁵ Ciftci (2003), 2.

V. CONCLUSIONS: THE FUTURE OF TURKEY'S CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS

While it is supposedly politically neutral, the armed forces evolved into Turkey's most powerful political actor. From 1960 through 1997, the political power of the military increased over time in a definite pattern. Civil-military friction led to a military coup which increased the power of the military. In each of the four interventions, the military quickly returned to a democracy, but not before cementing the formal institutions like the National Security Council which provided the military with more influence in the State's political decision making process.

During the Cold War, the status of civil-military relations and the guardian behavior of the TAF was condoned and even expected by the international community. The domestic results and the international attitudes towards Turkey legitimized the *coup d'état* as a viable tactic. The international community allowed this because NATO regarded the stability of Turkey as a higher priority than democracy. This philosophy lasted until the mid-1990s. After the fall of the Berlin Wall and the dissolution of the Soviet threat, Turkey's pattern of civil-military relations was no longer acceptable. This became apparent after the "No" decision on Turkey's EU membership bid at the Luxembourg summit in 1997. Following the conference, the EU issued progress reports linking the structure of Turkey's civil-military relations to its membership chances. Even after Turkey received the go ahead for EU candidacy in 1999, the message was clear that Turkey would have to change if it wanted full membership in the European club.

In order to comply with the EU political requirements of the Copenhagen Criteria, Turkey changed the form and function of its National Security Council. These reforms brought the character of civil-military relations closer to the ideal of civilian control but did not achieve it. The 7th Harmonization package complied with everything the EU required. This leads to a discussion on the future of Turkey's civil-military relations which can be determined from four scenarios. They are:

1. A New Status Quo:
2. Movement towards a "Defanged" Military:
3. Movement towards "Civilian Control"

4. A return to the friction, coup, pattern

The possibilities can be divided in two categories based on the involvement of the European Union. The first three scenarios are possible only if the EU remains engaged with Turkey and continues accession talks. The last situation is possible only if EU-Turkey accession talks break down either because the EU abandons Turkey or Turkey pulls its membership application. The future possibilities are represented in Figure 4.

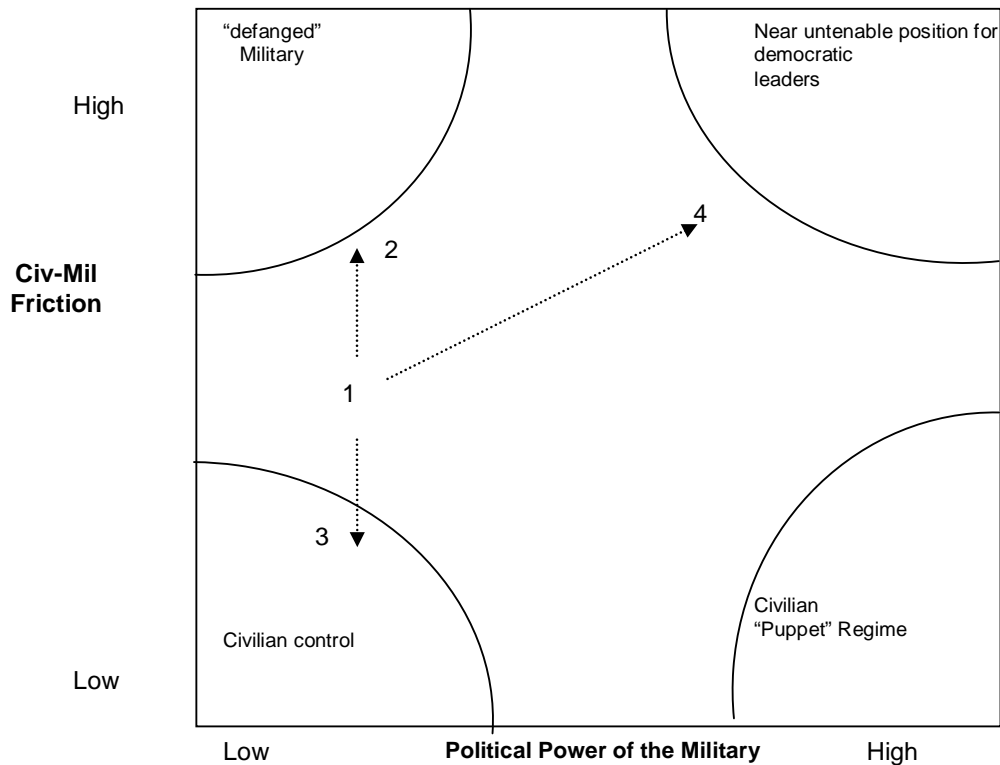


Figure 4. The Future of Turkey's Civil-Military Relations

A. EU AND TURKEY REMAIN ENGAGED

1. A New Status Quo

The 2003 reforms and pressure by the EU have moved Turkey's civil-military relations closer to civilian control. While it has shifted more power to the civilian government, it has not legitimized civilian control. The military still has support from society as the most trusted institution and the guardianship role. The functional difference between 2004 and 1997 is that the military is adopting a "wait and see" tactic regarding

the AKP government instead of challenging the politicians on very issue. This shows the military is willing to let the AKP succeed or fail on its own.

2. Movement towards a “Defanged Military”

An increase in civil-military friction while the military has less political power can lead to a “defanged military” where the military loses all of its autonomy. A situation where this may occur is if the politicians attempt to cut the military’s retirement fund (OYAK). Especially under the watchful eyes of the EU, the result will be a decrease in the prestige and material wealth of the military. This is the least desirable and least likely scenario.

3. Movement towards “Civilian Control”

In this scenario, further movement towards the civilian control will happen if the definition of Kemalism moves closer to EU ideals. To use a metaphor, the wrong way to go about this process is to replace Ataturk with Monnet. Instead, the best way is to continue the harmonization process. The structure of the decision-making system has been reduced making the next step a change. Another way this could happen is through the retirement of the senior level generals that remember all of the coups. This represents the regime theory of CMR where “norms” and “values” become important. This can happen through education and changes in Kemalism.¹⁸⁶

B. EU-TURKEY ACCESSION TALKS BREAKDOWN

1. A Return to the Friction, Coup, Power Cycle

What would cause the talks to breakdown? Until June of 2005, there was a danger that the EU would reject Turkey outright. However, now it appears the EU-Turkey talks are in danger if the European’s reject its own creation. There is still a slim possibility that Turkey could decide not to be part of the EU. Given the recent French and Dutch “No” votes on the EU Constitution, has increased the probability that Turkey will not achieve full membership. General Ozkok’s words may become a reality. Without the pressure from the EU, the friction, coup, power cycle can reemerge. This would be the worst case for the quality of Turkey’s democracy.

¹⁸⁶ This conclusion is reached based on e-mail interviews with MEP Oostlander and Professor Cizre.

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